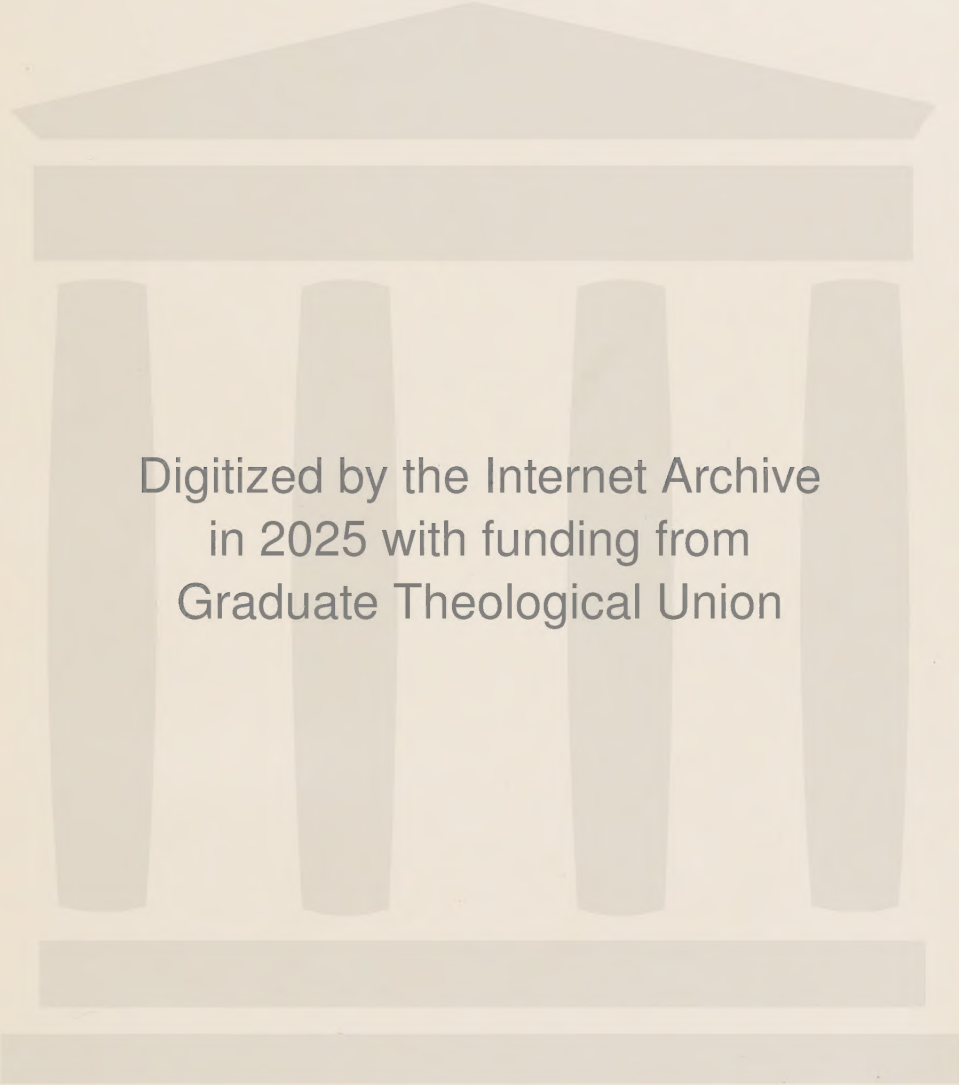


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THE AUGUSTINIAN AND THE RITSCHLIAN DOCTRINES
OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD

By

William Ellwood Craig, Jr.
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A THESIS

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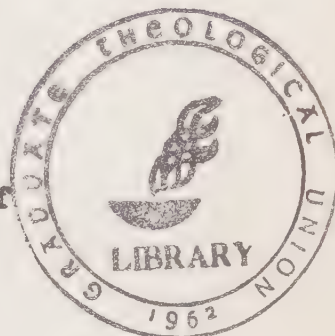
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APPROVED:

Emery H. Bossard
Instructor

Henry H. Shires
Dean

Filed:

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Henry H. Shires
Librarian

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

From the days when our Lord first taught us to pray, and in the same breath to say "Thy Kingdom come" and to ask for His gracious gifts in our daily lives, the doctrines of the Kingdom of God and the Grace of God have been inextricably commingled. The two are different aspects of the same thought, and where one fails, the other falls. Thus where a theologian has a strong sense of the divine Rule -- the Kingdom -- he will also naturally have a strong religious understanding of the need for and domination of divine Grace. And despite the many changes the doctrine of the Kingdom has undergone in the passage of Christian time, the idea of the divine Rule has been basic: the Kingdom has been variously understood, as different social organizations, different ecclesiastical institutions, even different states of mind, but these have all been added to the basic idea of the Rule of God in His creation. That is the catholic, ever-recurrent verity, and that is the test of strength or weakness in a theologian's doctrine of the Kingdom. No matter what his idea of the particular form the Kingdom will take, he will have a definite view as to the prevalence and puissance of the divine Rule of God; in turn, this view will be intimately connected with his basic view of divine Grace, Grace being the means

whereby the Rule is implemented in the world. Thus if his view of the Kingdom of God is deficient, his view of the Grace of God will be feeble, and vice-versa. When all the superstructures that a man erects about these doctrines, called out by the needs and limitations of his era, are removed, then the true correlation of them can be seen.

This thesis proposes to study the doctrines of Grace and the Kingdom in two Christian theologians conceded to be fully representative of their respective generations. One represents the coming of age of Latin theology and the greatest advance of that theology for the next thousand years, until the time of the Schoolmen; a great monument of divinely-inspired human thought, to be compared only with the achievements of S. Thomas Aquinas in the whole sweep of Christian thought. The other is a theologian on a more modest scale; he represents Christian theology at a time of spiritual and intellectual vacuity and the earnest attempt of a fine spirit to do something to revive it. His work is slight for another reason, that it is small in physical volume. He was concerned only with the doctrine of the Kingdom and those things he thought to be associated with that doctrine. S. Augustine wrote a whole shelf-full of books; Albrecht Ritschl wrote only one large and two small volumes. Nevertheless, he too is representative, perhaps even more representative than S. Augustine, of his own generation. For while Ritschl stood out above his fellows in his spiritual earnestness, S. Augustine stood out also for the sweep of his imagination and the

power of his mind. Thus if it appears, as I am afraid it does, that Ritschlianism has a hard time of it to appear relevant to Christianity alongside of Augustinianism, it should be remembered by the fair critic that Ritschl labored hard to assert what he thought Christian theology needed in the face of the opposition of far less earnest and spiritual men. His doctrine took hold and did much good and is even now heard in some few places, but has in the main been replaced by other movements after a life of (perhaps) fifty years; S. Augustine's doctrine was a trumpet-call to the African and the Western Church in his own generation, in a modified form prevailed absolutely for a thousand years, then fertilized the Reformation, exploded in the post-Reformation world in such movements as Jansenism, and is now finding secure lodgment in the minds of increasing numbers of theologians, Catholic and Protestant alike. It is the Catholic faith that in the course of time the fruits of the Spirit shall become obvious to all; I think they are obvious in this comparison of two men's doctrines of the Kingdom and Grace of God: one a fair representative of Catholic (and Reformation Protestant) Christianity and the other a fair representative of German Modernism of the last century.

CHAPTER I

S. AUGUSTINE'S DOCTRINE OF THE GRACE OF GOD.

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S. AUGUSTINE'S DOCTRINE OF THE GRACE OF GOD

To S. Augustine, the grace of God was the truest fact of existence; the one thing which he could not doubt. It was the grace of God that awoke him living in the morning, that accompanied and supported him through the day, that stood at his right hand in his work and that saved him from adding more weight to his sins, that accompanied him to his bed at night, and that guarded his sleeping hours. It was by the grace of God that he had been born and was himself, and by the grace of God that he would die and be brought to his final home. Every action of his was dominated by the grace of God: when inclined to proper action, it was by God's prevenient grace; when inclined to improper action it was because God withheld His grace; when he was sunk in the trials of life and conduct he was borne up by God's grace of perseverance. He received the grace of God in the sacraments of the Church and in every event that happened to him. God was dominant absolutely, and God's grace was His agency.

Augustine distinguishes several kinds, or rather operations, of grace: sacramental and non-sacramental, prevenient and concomittant, etc., but all are fundamentally one. Yet what was the nature of that one grace of God? Augustine has two answers. In the first place, he clearly states in some places that the grace of God is the Holy

Spirit of God, the Third Person of the Trinity.

The greatest gift is the Holy Spirit Himself; and therefore it is called Grace. ¹

But Augustine much more frequently speaks of Grace as something not identical with the Holy Spirit; indeed, frequently Grace is spoken of as a power given by or through the Holy Spirit. ² This latter depersonalization of Grace has achieved wide expression in Christian doctrine, and has perhaps been the usual and unquestioned pattern of thought of most Christians.

At any rate, as the expression of God's purpose, Grace is omnipotent, as God is, and it is of little moment for our purposes whether Grace is personal or impersonal. It is always the Grace of God:

'Grace' in Augustinian terminology means primarily the salvific Will of God, operating partly by way of the providential arrangement of exterior circumstances, partly by the secret inspiration of good thoughts and the communication of interior spiritual vitality: by a natural metonymy, it comes to mean the good thoughts and the spiritual vitality so imparted. ³

Augustine finds numerous distinctions within the nature of Grace in the course of his extensive study of the subject, some of which distinctions have taken a permanent

¹ Sermo XCIV: 1.

² De Spiritu et Littera, 15, 28.

³ Williams, Grace of God, p. 26.

place in Catholic theology. For instance, Augustine enlarged the Pauline doctrine of justification by the allegation of righteousness (i.e., preliminary absolution), by adding to the term 'justification' the meaning of progressive sanctification.¹ There is at least one clear statement of the distinction between justifying and sanctifying Grace in Augustine, in one of the anti-Pelagian writings:

It is necessary for a man that he should be not only justified when unrighteous by the grace of God, - that is, be changed from unholiness to righteousness - when he is requited with good for his evil; but that, even after he has become justified by faith, grace should accompany him on his way, and he should lean upon it, lest he fall. 2

A distinction is made between this Grace of justification and the Grace need^{ed}_A for 'final perseverance'. The Grace of justification is not by itself sufficient for the bestowal of eternal life, nor are all those to whom sanctifying Grace is given able to continue in that Grace without the further Grace of perseverance. It is thus conceivable that one might be baptized, receive forgiveness for sins, receive the Eucharist, live an exemplary life showing forth the fruits of the Spirit, and then fall away from the faith;

¹ Williams, op. cit., p. 22; shown by De Spiritu et Littera, 45, and by De Gratia et Libero Arbitrio, 13.

² De Gratia et Libero Arbitrio, 13.

only the Grace of perseverance could prevent this. We will see more of this Grace of perseverance in connection with Augustine's theory of election.¹

A distinction of great delicacy is made between 'sufficient' and 'efficacious' Grace, to employ the Scholastic terminology for Augustine's doctrine. It arose from the necessity of rationalizing the fringes of the doctrine of complete predestination: for instance, the question might be asked, "What is the difference between the Grace received by Christians who are predestined to persevere until death (the Grace of perseverance) and the Grace received by those Christians who receive the sacraments of the Church and are indistinguishable from their elect brethren, yet are destined to fall away to the mass of the damned?" He could not deny that all those who properly received the Christian sacraments truly received Grace, so he held that all Christians receive Grace adiutorium sine quo non (sufficient Grace) by which they may indeed save themselves, if they choose to accept and use it. Yet only the elect receive Grace adiutorium quo (efficacious Grace) which has the further unique property of leading its recipient to accept and use it.² To accompany

¹ Grace for perseverance is treated at length in the work De
Dono Perseverentia.

² De Correptione et Gratia, 34.

this there is the famous distinction between 'congruous' and 'incongruous' Grace, Grace which is suitable to the person's need, and Grace which is not suitable. Thus if one of the non-elect receives 'sufficient Grace', to prevent his applying it to his need it will be given in such a way that it will not strike home to his consciousness; while one of the elect will find that his 'efficacious Grace' is also 'congruous' because it will be appropriate to his predisposition, and he will thus persevere in his election.¹ It should be stated again that these distinctions are not different kinds of Grace, but different manifestations or modes of operation of the one Grace of God.

So much for the distinctions by which Augustine developed his doctrine of Grace; they are all of importance also in his doctrine of the Kingdom, in connection with the membership of the Kingdom. In this discussion of the nature of Grace it will be worth-while to examine some of the relations of Grace to various other facts in salvation, with a view to throwing more light upon the nature and operation of Grace itself. Something has already been said about Grace in relation to itself, that is the 'prevenience' of Grace. Here Augustine's constant remembrance of

¹ Williams, op. cit., pp. 36-38.

the Pauline question enters in: "What hast thou which thou¹ hast not received?" Thus if a gracious gift of God has been added to a man, it is only because he has received it of his own will, and has been given Grace so to receive it; that Grace to receive Grace is prevenient and comes from God.² The prevenience of Grace is evident in love: "We love Him because He first loved us."³ The prevenience of Grace is evident in faith:

The Grace of God, which both begins a man's faith and which enables it to persevere to the end. 4

The prevenience of Grace is evident in the whole process of salvation:

He anticipates us that we may be called; He will follow us that we may be glorified. He anticipates us that we may lead godly lives; He will follow us that we may always live with Him, because without Him we can do nothing. 5

It is evident throughout how intimate a connection exists between Grace and predestination. Between them there is the difference that predestination is the plan and preparation for the free gift of Grace, while Grace is the

1

I Corinthians 4:7.

2

De Correptione et Gratia, 2.

3

I John 4:19; quoted and enlarged upon in De Gratia et Libero Arbitrio, 38.

4

De Dono Perseverentia, 33.

5

De Natura et Gratia, contra Pelagium, 35.

free gift itself. Augustine notes in this connection that foreknowledge and predestination are not the same, since the former may exist without the latter while God cannot predestine what He does not foreknow (though there is nothing¹ which God does not foreknow).

As may be expected, Augustine puts Grace and Law on opposite sides, without denying the Law of God, by any means. He is anti-legalistic without being antinomian. His discussion of Grace in connection with the Law is full of quotations from S. Paul, with whose doctrine he is at one on this subject. There is the familiar idea that the Law is actively prejudicial as well as merely unprofitable without Grace to assist and illumine it; one of Law's utilities lies in driving those whom it charges with guilt to seek the freedom of Grace.² In one of these passages, Augustine comes close again to identifying Grace with the Holy Spirit:

[S. Paul] indeed, says that by the law sin received strength against man; and that man, by the commandment, although it be holy, and just, and good, nevertheless dies, and that death works in him through that which is good, from which death there is no deliverance unless the Spirit quickens him whom the letter had killed,-- as he says in another passage, "The letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life".³

¹ De Praedestinatione Sanctorum, 19.

² De Gratia Christi, et de Peccato Originali, contra Pelagium, I:9; De Correptione et Gratia, 2.

³ De Gratia et Libero Arbitrio, 23.

In the same place with this passage, Augustine is concerned with refuting a strange Pelagian aberration, which had claimed that the Law itself is the Grace of God by which men are helped not to sin. He denies it shortly. Nor does Grace consist, as Pelagius also affirmed, in mere teaching.¹ Finally, Grace in justification is not the mere example of Christ, as Pelagius and his modern disciples have held, but a real infusion of power given by Christ and purchased to us by those deeds which Pelagian and orthodox alike hold to be well worthy of emulation.²

What is the relation of Grace to good works? Augustine, in reply to Pelagius' claims, states that no man can do any good whatsoever without Grace to guide and strengthen him; it is not that Grace will make good work easier, but that Grace alone will make good work possible. He quotes Pelagius and refutes him:

[Pelagius says] "In order that men may more easily accomplish by grace that which they are commanded to do by free will." [Augustine replies:] Now, expunge the phrase 'more easily', and you will leave not only a full, but also a sound sense, if it be regarded as meaning simply this: "That men may accomplish through grace what they are commanded to do by free will." The addition of the words 'more easily', however, tacitly suggests the possibility of accomplishing good works even without the grace of God. But such

¹ De Gratia Christi, et de Peccato Originali, contra Pelagium, I:40.

² ibid., I:43.

a meaning is disallowed by Him who says, "Without me you can do nothing." 1

Again,

Wherefore God does many good things in man which man does not do; but man does none which God does not cause man to do. Accordingly, there would be no desire of good in man from the Lord if it were not a good; but if it is a good, we have it not save from Him who is supremely and incommunicably good. For what is the desire for good but love? 2

and all love is of good. This good is the result of true inward inclination, and consists more in that than in the external act of goodness, for that can be forced by fear. Since God impels all good inward inclinations, God alone does what good is done by us. 3 The relation between faith and good works fits in well with Augustine's scheme of salvation: he asserts that faith without works is no faith and insufficient for salvation; since faith and good works are both the gracious gift of God, they will be given to the elect and happily considered in his judgment. But the evil man who claims faith has not held it, and so can claim election on no grounds whatsoever; indeed, bad works are a sure sign of non-election, at the same time they purchase damnation:

1 De Gratia Christi, et de Peccato Originali, contra Pelagium, I:30.

2 Loc. cit.

3 Contra Duas Epistolas Pelagianorum, II:21.

Impossible is it that such a character should be deemed a 'vessel of election' by the apostle. ¹

It follows that the elect will be among the number of those who do good works, though many of the non-elect will also be of this group, since works and merit have no weight in election.

Merit is indeed a term closely allied to works, and bears a relationship to Grace similar to that of works. The concept of merit as a requisite to salvation was too deeply imbedded in Christian thought by Augustine's time for him to deny it, even had he so wished, and there is no evidence that he did so wish. Rather, along with his frequent assertions of human freedom (for how else but with the freedom of man has God a morality equal even to that of men?) he asserts the place of human merit in his dialectic system of predestination. The local African Church tradition had always found great power in the merit of martyrs and confessors; that had been part of the origins of the Novatian and Donatist schisms, and the assertive claims of confessors were a constant trouble to African bishops. His only great denial of merit, which is repeated over and over again, is that merit has anything to do with the

¹

De Gratia et Libero Arbitrio, 18

first Grace which brings the initial faith: that merit¹ could influence or determine God's predestination.

That is one side of the dialectic and is flatly asserted; the other side is upheld. Salvation and eternal life are owed² to the merit of righteousness.

For eternal life contains the whole reward in the promise of which we rejoice; nor can the reward precede merit, nor be given to a man before he is worthy of it. What could be more unjust than this, and what is more just than God? We should not then demand the reward before we deserve to get it.³

It is evident that eternal life and salvation are the reward for merit; that is too plainly part of the Gospel to be passed by. Yet only the predestined elect are saved, and the process works out in such a way as this: God predestines His elect, absolutely; the elect receive faith as the initial gift of Grace, and various other helpful Graces, such as the Grace of the sacraments and the Grace of perseverance; by means of these gracious gifts they are able to perform good works, and thus become meritorious; final judgment will be rendered according to merit. Augustine felt that this was the only way to reconcile the various

¹ De Praedestinatione Sanctorum, 7; passim.

² Epistola 194:20, quoted in Williams, Grace of God, p. 41.

³ De Moribus Ecclesiae Catholicae, 47.

statements of the Scripture and his own vivid religious experience. This may seem rigidly predestinarian, even then, but it is the only way of reconciling all of the evangelical statements.

From these and similar passages of Scripture, we gather the proof that God's grace is not given according to our merits. The truth is, we see that it is given not only where there are no good, but even where there are many evil merits preceding... But it is plain that when it has been given, also our good merits begin to be, -- yet only by means of it; for, were that only to withdraw itself, man falls, not raised up, but precipitated by free will. Wherefore no man ought, even when he begins to possess good merits, to attribute them to himself, but to God... (The apostle Paul) as after his evil merits obtained grace, so now after his good merits, received the crown. ¹

Salvation is plainly an award for good works and merit, but they are the result of Grace and faith, which is the gift of Grace; hence salvation is both reward and Grace. ²

But it may be objected that we may secure our own salvation through our faith in Christ's sacrifice, our faith thus becoming the efficient cause. Augustine agrees as to the decisive importance of faith, but states emphatically, as we have seen, that even that faith is the result of God's Grace; the prevenient Grace of God goes before and stirs up our faith.

¹ De Gratia et Libero Arbitrio, 13, 14.

² Ibid., 20.

When the gospel is preached, some believe, some believe not; but they who believe at the voice of the preacher from without, hear of the Father from within, and learn; while they who do not believe, hear outwardly, but inwardly do not hear nor learn; --that is to say, to the former it is given to believe; to the latter it is not given. 1

Even when a man wills not to believe, and hardens his heart against the Gospel, if it is the Lord's will that he hear and learn, the Lord will turn his heart.

And who will be so foolish and blasphemous as to say that God cannot change the evil wills of men, whichever, whenever, and wheresoever He chooses, and direct them to what is good? 2

It may be objected that man has some part in the process of salvation, even though the gift be of God, in that a man accepts the gift by his own free will. Augustine says that the will can be free from the primal burden of sin only by the Grace of God, so that true freedom of the will is itself a gracious gift.

After the fall, a more abundant exercise of God's mercy was required, because the will itself had to be freed from the bondage in which it was held by sin and death. And the will owes its freedom in no degree to itself, but solely to the grace of God which comes by faith in Jesus Christ; so that the very will, through which we accept all the other gifts of God which lead us on to

1 De Praedestinatione Sanctorum, 15.

2 Enchiridion, 98.

His eternal gift, is itself prepared of the Lord.¹

It would be impossible to summarize Augustine's thought on this matter in any way that could carry the conviction of his own writing. His treatise On Grace and Free Will covers the whole question of the relations of Grace, free will, merit, and good works, and read in its entirety leaves a profound impression of truth too many-sided to be compressed into logical argument. Indeed, Augustine shows no particular desire to synthesize the dialectic of Grace and free will, which is the sum of the matter. He is content to assert that both are true; his method is rather to discuss each separately as two equally true, dialectically opposed propositions than to discuss them together as a single, straight-line, synthetic proposition. His own summary of the matter may (or may not) be helpful:

There is always within us a free will, --but it is not always good; for it is either free from righteousness when it serves sin, --and then it is evil, --or else it is free from sin when it serves righteousness, --and then it is good. But the grace of God is always good; and by it comes to pass that a man is of a good will, though he was before of an evil one. By it also it comes to pass that the good will itself, which has begun to be, is enlarged, and made so great that it is able to fulfil the divine commandments which it shall wish, when it shall once firmly and perfectly wish. This is the purport of the Scripture: "If thou wilt, thou shalt keep the commandments;" so that the man who wills but is not able knows that he does not yet fully

¹

Ibid., 106.

will, and prays that he may have so great a will that it may suffice for keeping the commandments. And thus, indeed, he receives assistance to perform what he is commanded. Then is the will of use when we have ability; just as ability is also then of use when we have the will. 1

This is no synthesis, but a concurrent statement of two dialectically-opposed truths; the slight reconciliations attempted seem a bit artificial. Yet here as everywhere in Augustine's thought, emerges the truth for which we are seeking, that aside from the truth of free will, the will of God is supreme and is expressed in His Grace.

It may be taken as established, then, what is the nature of Grace in the doctrine of S. Augustine. It is the salvific Will of God, either the Third Person of the Trinity Himself or His agency; it is omnipotent and ever-present in all goodness. It acts in various ways, and may be classified by its action, but always it is the same Grace. It is intelligently directed according to God's will. It is not to be achieved, but the very desire for it ^{is} ~~as~~ a gift of Grace. It is not law or teaching, but a real infusion of Christ's power. It alone makes good works possible; it alone gives merit to a man; and it alone frees a man's will from bondage to sin.

1

De Gratia et Libero Arbitrio, 31.

In considering the nature of Grace, we have so far been mainly confined to the gracious operation of God in salvation. But God works in other fields, and it is the same Grace which executes His Will, or rather which is His Will. We may distinguish three fields of God's gracious operation, which presumably cover the fields of His action which we are able to know. These are the operation of God in salvation, in nature, and in human history. The first has been discussed, the last will be taken up under His operations in respect to His Kingdom, which is His rule in history. It remains to see whether or not God's Grace is omnipotent in nature, His creation.

S. Augustine was a Christian theologian, who had entered Christianity through Platonic philosophy, and was deeply understanding of Christianity's Hebraic background. From three sources, then, he could readily assert the omnipotence of God over His creation, and that God was "Almighty."

It was He who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, invisible and visible...thrones, dominions, principalities, powers, archangels, angels...sun, moon, and stars...terrestrial animals...things that fly, ...them that walk and creep,...them that swim. He made also man after His own image and likeness. ¹

All things were made from nothing, since to posit something

¹
De Symbolo ad Catechumenos, 2.

before creation is to deny His omnipotence.

Granting that He is Almighty, there cannot exist anything of which He should not be the Creator. 1

Furthermore, He planned that which He created, and sustains it for as long as it shall exist.

He that gave both good and bad essence with the stones, power of production with the trees, sense with the beasts of the field, and understanding with the angels; He, from whom is all being, beauty, form, and order, number, weight, and measure; He, from whom all nature, mean and excellent, all seeds of form, all forms of seed, all motion, both of forms and seed derive and have their being; He that gave flesh the original beauty, strength, propagation, form and shape, health and symmetry: He that gave the unreasonable soul sense, memory, and appetite, the reasonable phantasy, understanding, and will: He having left neither heaven, nor earth, nor angel, nor man, nor the most base and contemptible creature, neither the bird's feather, nor the herb's flower, nor the tree's leaf, without the true harmony of their parts, and peaceful concord of composition. 2

He is omnipotent; His Will always prevails:

But however strong may be the purposes either of angels or of men, whether of good or bad, whether these purposes fall in with the will of God or run counter to it, the will of the Omnipotent is never defeated; and His will can never be evil; because even when it inflicts evil it is just, and what is just is certainly not evil. The omnipotent God...never does anything except of His own free will, and never wills anything that He does not perform. 3

His Will prevails even despite the objective existence of evil. Not only does that evil exist only on God's

1 De Fide et Symbolo, 2.

2 De Civitate Dei, V:11.

3 Enchiridion, 102.

sufferance, but He can and does frequently use evil itself for His own good purposes.

For it would not be done did He not permit it (and of course His permission is not unwilling, but willing); nor would a Good Being permit evil to be done only that in His omnipotence He can turn evil into good. 1

[When S. Paul went up to Jerusalem] God did not fulfil His purpose through the good counsels of the Christians, but through the evil counsels of the Jews; so that those who opposed His purpose were more truly His servants than those who were the willing instruments of its accomplishment. 2

The omnipotence of God in nature is thus clearly seen: He can even bring good out of evil, which is most clearly in diametric opposition to Him of all His creation. The doctrine of a God limited by nature, or struggling with the recalcitrant stuff of existence is completely foreign to Augustine's thought.

In conclusion, then, according to Augustine, God and His Will are omnipotent in His creation and in the salvation of men. His Will is done, even in the face of natural and moral evil, which He indeed sometimes turns to His own good account. We proposed to examine this doctrine of the omnipotence of God in three fields: salvation, nature, and history. His omnipotence in history remains. His omnipotence

1 Ibid., 100.

2 Ibid., 101.

and gracious purpose in history are seen in the doctrine of the Kingdom of God, which is the rule of God in the world, and in relation to the kingdom of the world which is the rule of men. When these have been examined, we will be in a position to see whether or not Augustine's doctrine of the Kingdom of God is influenced or determined by his doctrine of God's Grace and omnipotent Will.

CHAPTER II

S. AUGUSTINE'S DOCTRINE OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

CHAPTER II

S. AUGUSTINE'S DOCTRINE OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD

Doctor Headlam finds three main influences at work in S. Augustine's doctrines of the Kingdom and of the Church. First, there is the standard Western view prevalent before his time, worked out by S. Cyprian, strong, coherent, and narrow, a rigid and logical system which appealed to the Donatist schismatics even more than it did to the African Catholics. Augustine was influenced by the doctrine itself¹ through his great admiration for Cyprian.

A second influence was Augustine's own personal contributions: his own theology and his character. He was a theologian rather than a statesman as Cyprian had been. He was strongly influenced by Platonism, from which came his characteristic view that any external forms found in earth are only an imperfect copy of the heavenly standards. His doctrine of God was broader and far more dynamic than anything the West had hitherto seen. But the fundamental personal influence was that of his doctrine of Grace, which when worked out to its logical conclusion, was almost entirely inconsistent with any purely ecclesiastical² theory.

¹ Headlam, Church and Christian Reunion, p. 140.

² Ibid., p 141.

A third and most potent influence was that of the Donatist schism, against which he led a life-long fight, and which was always very close to him in Africa, where it had originated and grown strongest. Their claim to be the only true and pure Catholic Church was the point of attack, and the claim which influenced his own doctrine profoundly, particularly in the doctrine of Orders.¹

These influences are to be found throughout Augustine's work, and provide suggestions as to the sources of his doctrine, which suggestions will occur from time to time.

S. Augustine's doctrine of the Kingdom of God, as it grew out of this background, is exceedingly complex. Many varying statements have been made, ranging from a complete and unicellular identification of the Kingdom with the Catholic Church to a denial of the Kingdom anywhere but in the hearts of Christians. Both these, and numerous others, can be found here and there through his writings. It will be seen that, to a certain degree, both opposite views are correct; but to decide on what view or views are dominant in Augustine's thought, and hence represent his clearest mind on the subject, it will be necessary to examine all the different types of references to the Kingdom to be found in his work. Then it will be possible to compare them and draw

¹

Ibid., pp. 142-44.

out his complete doctrine.

There is in his thought first the concept of the Kingdom of God simply as the reign of God in the individual Christian's soul. (It must always be remembered that the fundamental meaning of Kingdom: Regnum, is "Rule" or "Reign"). He held this doctrine in common with most of the Fathers, as well as the Church in all its branches ever since. This view has always had wide currency, and is usually based on the famous passage in S. Luke: "The Kingdom of God is within¹ you." Thus Augustine says:

The Kingdom of heaven, which is the perfect and highest wisdom of the rational soul... 2

Augustine never refers to the Kingdom as being within, unless he has the intention of showing some moral obligation or truth; so that we may safely conclude that this interpretation of the Kingdom of God is not primary, but rather is a way of speaking with regard to the truth and purity which ought to pervade the heart of the Christian. A typical example of the linking of these two ideas appears in the Manichean writings:

The kingdom of heaven is within us; and thus we must worship God from our inmost feelings, that out of the

¹ S. Luke 17:21.

² De Sermone Domini in Monte secundum Matthaeum, I:12.

abundance of the heart the mouth may speak, instead of honoring Him with our lips...while our hearts are far from Him. 1

Another reference shows more plainly that he is not speaking of the Kingdom of God itself, but drawing a moral parallel from the perfection of the Kingdom to what should be the perfection of the Christian heart:

Those who, by bringing in order all the motions of the soul, and subjecting them to reason--i.e., to the mind and spirit--and by having their carnal lusts thoroughly subdued, become a kingdom of God: in which all things are so arranged, that that which is chief and pre-eminent in man rules over the other elements, which are common to us with the beasts; and the very element which is pre-eminent in man, i.e., mind and reason, is brought under subjection to something better still, which is the truth itself, the only-begotten Son of God. 2

It seems plain that when Augustine refers to the reign of God in the soul he is not defining the Kingdom of God, but is drawing a parallel from his vision of the divine order of the Kingdom.

In much the same way as that in which Augustine speaks of the Kingdom as the reign of God in the soul is his occasional reference to the Kingdom as the state of salvation. For example:

Salvation and everlasting life, which cannot be anything else than the kingdom of God, to which fellowship with Christ alone introduces us.....3

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Contra Faustum Manichaeum, XXII:67.

2

De Sermone Domini in Monte secundum Matthaeum, I:9.

3

De Peccatorum Meritis et Remissione, et de Baptismo Parvulorum, I:15.

Such references are confined to the Pelagian writings, indicating that this definition of the Kingdom is not primary in Augustine's thought, but is used to serve a polemical purpose. Indeed, this definition is based upon an emphatic Scriptural passage, which Augustine delights in repeating, referring to it as "sententia illa principalis"; that is, John 3:5,

Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.

The reference is used as a proof-text every time he comes back to one of his anti-Pelagian theses: i.e., the strenuous affirmation of the necessity of baptism for entrance to the Kingdom.¹ This would indicate, then, that his emphasis here is rather on the requirements for entrance to the Kingdom than the careful definition of the Kingdom itself.

Another possible interpretation of the Kingdom of God, widely current in Augustine's time, and recurrent in times of crisis ever since, is the Millenarian idea, that of the imminent, catastrophic, earthly Second Coming of Christ. This doctrine was apparently dominant in the first decades of the Christian Church (witness S. Paul's early epistles) and while it fell in the background of the main stream of Christian theology, was a common note in

¹ Herrick, Kingdom of God in the Fathers, p. 82.

Christianity in Augustine's time. He inherited it in a spiritualized form and held it in his own early days, but after consideration he deliberately abandoned it; he then wrote against it in so persuasive a fashion that it was abandoned from all Catholic theology. His abandonment consisted in a change of definition: whereas Millenarianism, by its interpretation of the passage Revelation 20:1-6, held to a carnal idea of a thousand-year interval between the future general resurrection and the Final Judgment--in which some pictured the most sensuous kind of pleasure for the saints; Augustine changed all that by interpreting the first resurrection as not being in the future, but in the past, when each Christian is baptized and thus resurrected from his former body of sin. He held that the Church was then actually living in the Millenium, instead of a future Millenium to begin with a general resurrection; the force with which his interpretation was accepted was shown by the great spiritual turmoils Europe experienced as the year 1000 A.D. approached, when men taught by Augustine began to look for signs of the Coming.

Augustine held this crude Millenarianism at first. One of his early sermons was written for the octave of Easter. It interprets the eighth day of the octave as meaning the final rest of the saints in heaven at the end of the Millenium, while the Sabbath, or seventh day, means the coming Millen-

ial rest of the saints on earth:

The Lord will reign on earth, as the Scriptures say... There have been, from the Creation to the first coming of Christ (the Incarnation) five millenia or week-days of history...We are in the sixth day. ¹

In the course of time, with the pressure of the Donatist and Pelagian controversies, he changed his mind. In the City of God that change is fully described, in a passage which alone was forceful enough to throw the whole Millenarian case out of court, in the judgment of the Church. The distinction by which this is accomplished is one between the "first resurrection" and the "second resurrection": as the resurrection of the soul under Grace, from the resurrection of the body at the Universal Judgment.

Of these two resurrections, John the evangelist, in the book called Apocalypse, has spoken in such a way that the first resurrection has been misunderstood by some of our people and turned into certain ridiculous fables...which I myself once held... Those who...have surmised that the first resurrection would be a corporal one, have, among other reasons, been mainly moved by the number: a thousand years, as though there were destined to be a Sabbath rest of that duration for the saints, a holy vacation after six thousand years of labor,...and that the saints are to arise again to keep this Sabbath. Which opinion would be at least tolerable, if it were understood that the saints would enjoy certain spiritual delights from the presence of the Lord. For we ourselves were formerly of this opinion. But when they say that those who then rise again will spend their time in immoderate carnal

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Sermo 259; (Migne). Quoted in Robertson, Regnum Dei, p. 170; not available in English translation.

feastings--such things cannot possibly be believed except by carnal persons. 1

So he had re-interpreted it to suit more closely the demands of Christian theology. He now explains the first resurrection

As the resurrection of souls from the death of sin to faith in Christ, the binding of Satan as the limitation of his power to the hearts of the wicked, and the thousand years as the interval between the first and second Advents. During this period the true saints, even on earth, reign with Christ. 2

It will thus be seen that the Millenarian interpretation of the Kingdom of God is not part of Augustine's doctrine, since he once held it and later carefully disposed of it for himself and for the whole Church.

Augustine abandoned the Millenarian doctrine, but his re-interpretation of it reinforced another aspect of his thought concerning the Kingdom, an aspect which was already strong in his mind as it has been universal throughout Christianity. That is the doctrine which is perhaps the primary interpretation of the Kingdom of God: the Eschatological Kingdom of God, that which is to come at the end of time, when the old heavens and earth shall pass away and a new heavens and earth take their place, and when the Son of God shall come in Final Judgment, terminating all the affairs

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De Civitate Dei, XX:7; the argument is elaborated through chapters seven to nine.

2

Robertson, op. cit., p 171.

of this life. This is the primary idea of the Kingdom of God from New Testament times to the present, and finds more than ample documentation in Augustine's works. There are hundreds of references among his writings, elaborated in many directions, and brought to the fore whenever he alludes either to the power of God or to the process of salvation. For the Eschatological Kingdom follows from the knowledge of the omnipotence of God: thus it is this interpretation which is in Augustine's mind whenever he equates the Kingdom with the Regnum Dei (it is of course the generic meaning of the word "Kingdom") which is very frequently. It follows also from the doctrine of salvation: as mentioned above, the Kingdom is often referred to as the state of salvation; that state of salvation is the one in which God's Will rules (i.e., where His "Kingdom" is) without any hindrance.

This interpretation is expanded in such passages as Enchiridion lll, where the Eschatological Kingdom is partially described as a contrast between the eternally happy life of the elect and the eternally unhappy life of the reprobate. In either case, God's Will is eternally and completely done:

After the resurrection, however, when the final, universal judgment has been completed, there shall be two kingdoms, each with its own distinct boundaries, the one Christ's, the other the devil's; the one consisting of the good, the other of the bad, both however consisting of angels and men. The former shall have no will, the latter no power, to sin, and neither shall have any power to choose death; but the former shall live truly and happily in

eternal life, the latter shall drag a miserable existence in eternal death without the power of dying; for the life and the death shall both be without end. But among the former there shall be degrees of happiness, one being more pre-eminently happy than another; and among the latter there shall be degrees of misery, one being more endurably miserable than another. 1

It is this Kingdom which he has in mind in such passages as the following, which refer to it as the future state of the elect:

2

The saints who shall possess the kingdom of God....

In the resurrection our earthly bodies shall, by that change which Paul fully describes, become spiritual bodies, and so heavenly, that thus we may possess the kingdom of heaven. 3

For Christ's coming shall make present to believers the kingdom of God. 4

This interpretation of the Kingdom of God is one of the most prominent in Augustine's writings, and the one interpretation universally held by the Christian Church. It is primary in his thought, and the fundamental note accompanying all his other interpretations. It is intimately connected with his other primary interpretation of the Kingdom, which we shall consider next. It shades into it naturally; as soon as Augustine begins to elaborate the

1 Enchiridion, 111.

2 De Virginitate, 6.

3 Contra Faustum Manichaeum, XIX: 31.

4 Enarrationes in Psalmis, LXXII:17.

conditions of the Eschatological Kingdom he sees the intimate connection between the mundane life of the elect and the eschatological eternal life: this thought naturally leads to that institution or organism which alone links the lives of the elect here on earth and the elect gathered up into the Eschatological Kingdom, that institution being the Church. In his interpretation of the Church as the Kingdom of God, Augustine has two principal ideas in mind: first, a simple association of the already discussed Celestial Kingdom of God with the Church; finally, a more or less complete identification of the two. We shall discuss first the simple association, which is his interpretation of the Kingdom of God as the Celestial Kingdom, the state of the blessed in heaven, often as a continuity with the Christian society on earth; then we shall discuss the varying degrees by which Augustine identifies the Kingdom of God with the Catholic Church.

Some references can be found in which the Kingdom of God is spoken of as, or associated with, the state of the blessed elect between death and Judgment. We have chosen to speak of this interpretation as that of the Celestial Kingdom of God; it is close to, but distinct from the Eschatological Kingdom as being already in existence, being peopled with those saints who have gone before and who will follow after until the end of time, when the Final Judgment will

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usher in the eternal Eschatological Kingdom. This present Celestial Kingdom also is related closely to the Millenarian Kingdom, which Augustine re-interpreted and which has already been discussed, for it is that Millenium in which we live and in which the Celestial Kingdom is being gathered. The Celestial Kingdom is referred to only when (at least

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Indeed, the Celestial Kingdom is a real part of the Church. It is made up of the saints who have died and will die, and are awaiting the general resurrection, together with the angels who remained faithful to God. Thus part of it (the saints) has been redeemed from the life of sin after the fall; another part (the holy angels) never did fall. In Ench. 56, Augustine says that the holy angels, at least, enjoy uninterrupted happiness and help the Church still on earth "which wanders as a stranger" and which "shall be one in the fellowship of eternity" with the Celestial Kingdom at the end of time.

It may be asked whether or no this is part of a fuller doctrine of Purgatory. It is a well-known fact that the implications of the very early custom of praying for the dead were first seen in the Churches of Carthage and Milan, but I doubt if Augustine saw them. (cf. H.B. Swete, in JTS, vol. VIII, 1905-06, pp. 500-514, on "Prayers for the Dead"). Augustine found the custom of praying for the departed saints firmly established in the African Church, and sought to regulate the custom. Thus in Ench. 110, he says that the Sacrifice of the Altar is offered "on behalf of all the baptized dead: they are thank-offerings for the very good, they are propitiatory offerings for the not very bad, and in the case of the very bad, even though they do not assist the dead, they are a species of consolation to the living." In only one passage is there a definite basis for a full doctrine of Purgatory, in Ench. 109: (during this interval) the soul dwells in a hidden retreat, where it enjoys rest or suffers affliction just in proportion to the merit it has earned by the life which it led ~~at~~ on earth." In Civ. Dei XXI:26 he speaks of a fire purging the sinner, but it rather a means of separating the good from the bad than an ultimately salvific purgation of the mainly good. Where a theologian can link together the ideas of the state of the saints in the Celestial Kingdom with the state of the ones who "suffer affliction", he is on the way to the

implicitly) it is coupled with reference to the Christian society here on earth, usually in the form of a contrast between the soiled and incomplete character of the earthly society and the glories of that society which is to be. It may thus be concluded that this interpretation is not primary in Augustine's thought, but follows naturally upon his contemplation of the sins and negligences all can observe in the earthly Christian Church. Augustine was always acutely aware of this contrast, as it was delightedly drawn out and amplified by the Donatists and other sects of Puritans.

She it is that hath given us birth, she is the Church of the saints, she hath nourished us, she who is in part a pilgrim, in part abiding in the heavens. In the part which abideth in heaven is the bliss of angels, in the part which wandereth in this world is the hope of the righteous. 1

The passage therefore both of Christ and of us is hence to the Father, from this world to the kingdom of heaven, from life mortal to life immortal, from life earthly to life heavenly, from life corruptible to life incorruptible, from intimacy with tribulations to perpetual security. 2

God hath an eternal kingdom. For when did He not reign? When did He begin to reign? For His kingdom hath no beginning, neither shall it have ending...We shall be

full doctrine. According to a later terminology, then, the Eschatological Kingdom is the Church Triumphant, the Celestial Kingdom is the Church Expectant, and the Church "wandering here on earth, among strangers" is the Church Militant.

1 Enarrationes in Psalmis, CXLIX:3.

2 Ibid., LXIX:2.

ourselvesⁱⁿ His kingdom, if believing in Him we make progress in this faith. ¹

Finally we come to that interpretation which, with the non-Millenarian Eschatological interpretation, is the best represented in Augustine's works: which is the more or less complete identification of the Kingdom of God with the Catholic Church here and hereafter. There are a great many nuances of meaning that come under this general interpretation, some too subtle to be classified separately. We will discuss several of these shades of meaning, listing them as considerations which bear upon the vexed question of whether or not S. Augustine meant explicitly and fully to identify the Church with the Kingdom of God, as the medieval Church understood him to mean. At the conclusion of these considerations we will undertake to draw out the answer to this question, from the passages and references we shall quote, bearing also in mind the three tendencies in Augustine's thought we noted at the beginning of this chapter: the rigid ecclesiasticism he inherited from the admired Cyprian, his own theology of Grace and his "twice-born" religious experience, and the attacks of the Donatist Puritans on Catholicism.

First, there is the type of passage, innumerable throughout Augustine's writings, in which is made a simple,

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Sermo 7:5.

unmodified identification of the Church with the Kingdom of God; these are the passages in which the medieval Church later found its justification, passing over silently some of the other passages which throw a different light upon this identification. If it is a mistake to study Augustine's doctrine of Grace with the assumption that his doctrine could be fitted into a single coherent system, it is as great a mistake to carry the same attitude to his doctrine of the Kingdom; his mind was too many-sided ever to have been content to rest with the flat statement that the Church and the Kingdom are one and the same. Yet the following passages are representative of a multitude of similar passages throughout his¹ works:

For you are not instructed in the kingdom of heaven, -- that is, in the true Catholic Church of Christ. 2

[Baptism] is given to them not only for entrance into the kingdom of God, but also for attaining salvation and eternal life, which none can have outside the kingdom of God. 3

Secondly, there is a large group of passages which identify the Church with the Kingdom of God, but which draw out the contrast between the spotted and sinful present Church

¹ As examples of many similar passages which unconsciously assume this identification, see De Peccatorum Meritis et Remissione, et de Baptismo Parvulorum, III:21; Enarrationes in Psalmis, LVII:12.

² Contra Faustum Manichaeum, IV:2.

³ De Pecc. Mer. et Remiss., II:1.

with the spotless future Church. This type of idea is close to the already discussed doctrine of the Celestial Kingdom of God, yet it differs in looking for the purification of the Church at the end of time, in the Final Judgment; it is close to the already discussed doctrine of the Eschatological Kingdom, yet it differs in seeking the continuity of the earthly Catholic Church with the Eschatological Kingdom. Of his full doctrine of the Kingdom in relation to the Church these are perhaps the most representative single passages in Augustine's writing, yet they cannot contain the whole of his thought. First of all we shall consider his own mature criticism, made toward the end of his life, of all his former writings concerning the Church:

Now whenever I have spoken in these books of the "Church without spot or wrinkle", that is not to be taken as if it were so now, but as it is being prepared finally to be seen as glorious. Now on account of the ignorance and infirmity of its members, it has each day to pray: "Forgive us our sins". ¹

This attitude, while more explicitly stated here, is not confined to this portion of his life. It is found from time to time in all but the earliest of his writings, in his references to the Church as the Kingdom of God. We shall quote one reference in full, that from the City of God, as being

¹ Retractationes, II:18; quoted by Headlam, Op. cit., p. 155.

the best statement of this aspect of his doctrine:

We must understand in one sense the kingdom of heaven in which exists together both he who breaks what he teaches and he who does it...and in another sense the kingdom of heaven into which only he who does what he teaches shall enter. Consequently, where both classes exist, it is the Church as it now is, but where only the one shall exist, it is the Church as it is destined to be when no wicked person shall be in her. Therefore the Church even now is the kingdom of Christ, and the kingdom of heaven. Accordingly, even now His saints reign with Him, though otherwise than as they shall reign hereafter; and yet, though the tares grow in the Church along with the wheat, they do not reign with Him...It is then of this kingdom militant, in which conflict with the enemy is still maintained, and war carried on with warring lusts, or government laid upon them as they yield, until we come to that most peaceful kingdom in which we shall reign without an enemy...The souls of the pious dead are not separated from the Church, which even now is the kingdom of Christ; otherwise there would be no remembrance made of them at the altar of God in the partaking of the body of Christ, nor would it do any good in danger to run to His baptism, that we might not pass from this life without it; nor to reconciliation, if by impenitence or a bad conscience anyone might be severed from His body. For why are these things practiced, if not because the faithful, even though dead, are His members? 1

Furthermore,

If [the Pelagians] would have the Church consist only of good men, whom they assert to be without any sin whatever, that so the Church might be without spot or wrinkle...how can they be members of the Church, of whom the voice of a truthful humility declares, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves"? Or how could the Church offer up that prayer which the Lord taught her to use, "Forgive us our debts", if in this world the Church is without a spot or blemish? 2

1 De Civitate Dei, XX:9.

2 De Gestis Pelagii, 27.

So much for the contrast of the present profaned Church and the future sanctified Church. There is another similar contrast drawn by Augustine, between the present communio externa, the whole body of Christians, good and evil alike; and the also present communio sanctorum, the body of the elect known only to God, also members of the communio externa. We shall shortly see that Augustine in some places may go so far as implicitly to identify these two communiones, but his more usual terms are to contrast them carefully. Thus:

Bad men...of whom it is most clear that they do not belong to the Church of God, though they seem to be within it, inasmuch as they are covetous, robbers, usurers, envious, evil thinkers, and the like.....
 [The communio externa contains] not only the operations of the gifts of God, which are common to good and bad alike, but also the inner bond of charity conspicuous in those who have the Holy Spirit. 1

Behold with lamentation crowds like these around your altars;...they are annointed with holy oil, and yet, as the apostle assures us with the clear- 2
 ness of truth, shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

Those who are in the house through communion in the sacraments, yet so as to be outside the house through the perversity of their character. 3

Many too have believed, or rather may, with a kind of shadowy appearance of faith, have attached themselves to His people; yet he knoweth what He counteth,

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De Baptismo, contra Donatistas, VI:5.

2

Contra Litteras Petiliani Donatistae Cirtensis Episcopi, II:239.

3

De Baptismo, contra Donatistas, VII:100.

what he winnoweth away...Within these walls are more than will be in the kingdom of God, in the heavenly Jerusalem. 1

Yet despite this plain contrast, there are some passages in which the communio externa and the communio sanctorum are implicitly (though nowhere explicitly) identified. This identification arises from the practical necessity of assuming that the elect now living on earth must be identical with the externa communio, for the preaching of the Word and the celebration of the sacraments.

We therefore call men elected, and Christ's disciples, and God's children, because they are to be so called whom being regenerated, we see to live piously; but they are truly then what they are called if they shall abide in that on account of which they are so called. 2

Finally, there is the question as to whether God's plan of election applies to any of those who have lived before Christ did His saving work. Were there any elect before Christ, and were the elect in the Kingdom of God? Aside from this famous passage in Epistle 102, there are

1 Enarrationes in Psalmis, CXLVII:8.

2 De Correptione et Gratia, 22; this is an identification brought out by Robertson, Regnum Dei, p. 201, which he finds also in Sermo 214:11, which I have been unable to verify, it being in the Latin text. There seem to be no other special references, neither according to Robertson nor any other commentator, and since the distinction fits into his own interpretation of S. Augustine's doctrine, it is probably an extremely minor one, if it has any real existence at all in Augustine's thought.

numerous confirming references:

From the beginning of the human race whosoever believed in Him, and in any way knew Him, and lived in a pious and just manner according to His precepts, was undoubtedly saved by Him, in whatever time and place he may have lived. For as we believe in Him both as dwelling with the Father and as having come in the flesh, so the men of the former ages believed in Him both as dwelling with the Father and as destined to come in the flesh. And the nature of the faith is not changed nor is the salvation made different in our age, by the fact that in consequence of the difference between the two epochs, that which was then foretold as future is now proclaimed as past...The true religion, although formerly set forth and practiced under other names and with other symbolic rites than it now has, and formerly more obscurely revealed and known to fewer persons than now in the time of clearer light and wider diffusion, is one and the same in both periods... Thus the salvation provided by this religion by which alone, as alone true, true salvation is truly promised, was never wanting to anyone who was worthy of it, and he to whom it was wanting was not worthy of it. 1 And from the beginning of the human family even to the end of time, it is preached, to some for their advantage, to some for their condemnation. Accordingly, those to whom it has not been preached at all are those who were fore-known as persons who would not believe;...while those to whom, as persons who would believe, the truth is proclaimed, are being prepared for the kingdom of heaven and for the society of the holy angels. 2

In this remarkable letter, which is the clearest short statement in Augustine's works of the completely predestinarian side of his thought, there is to be observed the very inter-

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In the Retractationes, II:31, Augustine notes that he did not mean that anyone had been worthy of salvation by his own merit, but that some had been worthy because of merit imputed to them by God's predestinating them to salvation.

2

Epistolae, CII:12,15.

esting consequences which follow upon any doctrine of predestination which is entirely coherent; consequences which follow logically and inevitably. For while his admission of the elect before Christ probably applies primarily to the saints of the Old Testament, he does not and cannot logically limit the application of the principle to them.

There are cases like Job and Melchizedek...and the Sibyl, who were remote from contact with it. There was indeed never more than one society identifiable with the Kingdom of God on earth, but that does not preclude us from believing that individuals may have been within the number of the elect, though never visibly included in the communio externa of God's people. In a sense then Augustine's narrow Predestinarianism led him directly to the widest of Universalism [hardly a proper use of the term]. Practically no doubt he makes very sparing use of these premises...Cases of this kind lie ex hypothesis beyond our powers of ascertainment, and to argue from them is impossible. But the principle remains, and makes it impossible to hold as a formal theory the necessary inclusion in the visible Church on earth of the whole number of the predestined. ¹

It will now be seen, from the mere weight of the numerous references alone--which indicates their recurrent importance to Augustine's mind--that in his doctrine there are two interpretations of the Kingdom of God which are primary and fundamental. These are the interpretations of the Eschatological Kingdom and the Church. The former is obvious, but not by any means Augustine's exclusive view. It is found in almost every theologian, before and since Augustine's time. It is the one view of the Kingdom upon

¹ Robertson, op. cit., p. 200.

which almost all can agree. Thus it indicates nothing unique when we find it again and again in his works; it may therefore be stated, as emphatically as it deserves, and then may be put aside for an examination of the other interpretation which is more original with Augustine, that of the Kingdom as the Church. We considered six different degrees of relationship between the Church and the Kingdom and it will be readily seen that they are not all mutually compatible. Thus many passages identify the two, others distinguish between them in varying degrees. How may any order be found in these statements, or in Augustine's thought? Or are there not, after all, two different strands of thought mingled together, mutually incompatible, but worked out together in the hospitable mind of the great theologian? This is the view held by most students (perhaps all; I have heard no differing voices) since Schaff and Harnack; it is the view we shall proceed to expand. It is thereby held that two antagonistic ideas and attitudes struggled together in Augustine's mind, without either achieving the upper hand (though perhaps the latter idea prevailed at the end of his life, as a result of the long Pelagian controversies). These two ideas are the contemporary sacramental Catholicism in which Augustine had found the truth of Christianity after long struggles; and his rigoristic Predestinarianism, which his violent nature and his long consideration of Pauline theology had

developed in his mind. These two tendencies influence his doctrine of the Kingdom at every turn, and must be studied closely if Augustine's conception of the Kingdom is to be seen in its rich fullness.

Augustine believed in the Catholic Church for three very good reasons. First, it was his spiritual home, that had stood out against his errors when he was in heresy and which had been his mother's source of strength when she had prayed for his conversion. It had welcomed him and sheltered him while his faith was still growing. It was a fortress to him now, which he felt duty-bound to defend. Second, it was the Catholic Church which gave a warrant to the Holy Scriptures from which he gained constant inspiration and which were the basis of his Christian teaching. Third, the strength and unity of the Catholic Church continually impressed him, demonstrating by its effectiveness its truth.

He records in his Confessions the evident peace which he observed in the Catholic Church, even before he was converted. His memories of childhood experiences in the church with his mother, the profound impression the sanctity of S. Ambrose made upon him while he was teaching in Milan, his gradual understanding of the truth of the Scriptures gained in the Church, all attest the importance he attached to it and the respect and love that were in his heart. His surprise

as he discovered, one by one, that the cavils of the Manicheans against Christianity were false is detailed with evident joy. He repeats often the famous saying of S. Cyprian: "he cannot have God for Father who has not the Church for his mother."

Since the time I began to hear something of wisdom...I rejoiced to have found the same in the faith of our spiritual mother, Thy Catholic Church. 1

His love for the Church finds perhaps its highest expression when he speaks of his mother, S. Monica, and of her character and prayers for his conversion. He speaks with great emotion of her joy when his prayers were fulfilled, and of her words on her death-bed:

"There was indeed one thing for which I wished to tarry a little in this life, and that was that I might see thee a Catholic Christian before I died." 2

He speaks of the customs and ceremonies of the Church with loving appreciation, but without arguing over them. They are accepted as the normal life of the Christian.

The Holy Scripture was a constant source of inspiration, doctrine, and comfort to Augustine. A casual acquaintance with his works is enough to impress the reader with the amazingly intimate knowledge of the Scripture, verse by verse, which Augustine possessed: almost every other sent-

1 Confessiones, VII:1.

2 Ibid., IX:26.

ence is either a direct quotation or a reference. But he was given the Scripture, and taught to read it, by the Catholic Church. Thus he can say:

For my part, I should not believe the gospel except as moved by the authority of the Catholic Church... [Any book of the Bible] I must needs believe if I believe the gospel, since both writings alike Catholic authority commends to me. 1

He goes so far in the same place as to argue that if the Manicheans were able to show any proof in the Scripture of the truth of Mani, he would have to cease believing the Scripture, because the Catholic Church had told him that Manicheism was not to be found therein.

Thirdly, the influence which had great effect upon him when he was hesitating about his conversion continually impressed him before and after; namely, the strength and unity of the Catholic Church. He saw by these tokens that it was really the "rock in a desert land" which the Lord had promised. He uses the unity of the Church in argument against the schismatics over and over again; he is continually exulting in it. He found in it the intellectual, religious, and moral security for which he long had searched.

The consent of peoples and nations keeps me in the Church; so does her authority, inaugurated by miracles, nourished by hope, enlarged by love, established by age. The succession of priests keeps me, beginning from the very seat of the Apostle Peter, to whom the Lord

1 Contra Epistolam Manichaei quam vocant Fundamenti, 6.

after His resurrection gave it in charge to feed His sheep, down to the present episcopate. And so does the name itself of Catholic, which not without reason amid so many heresies, the Church has thus retained; so that though all the heretics wish to be called Catholics, yet when a stranger asks where the Catholic Church meets, no heretic will venture to point to his own chapel or house. 1

Yet it is the truth of the Catholic faith by which he is most impressed; the truth is the thing which alone might force him to leave the Church were he to discover her wrong.

Now if the truth is so clearly proved that no possibility of a doubt is left, it must be set before all things that keep me in the Catholic Church; but if there is only a promise [from the heretics] without any fulfillment, no one shall move me from the faith which binds my mind with ties so many and so strong to the Christian religion. 2

He had little fear that any such eventuality would ever come to pass.

These things together show somewhat of one of the two main influences of Augustine's life on his thought. The Catholic Church was his home, his mother, the Kingdom of God and the hope for the Kingdom.

Augustine's was not a nature to be satisfied with abstract idealism; imagination and devotion demanded a satisfaction which he found in the practical life of the Church. His personality found its necessary freedom of scope for action, and its equally necessary limitation, in the environment of a life which he felt to be immeasurably greater than his own. When he says that he should not be

1 Ibid., 5.

2 Loc. cit.

a believer in the gospel unless the authority of the Catholic Church moved him to believe, he is not insisting on dogmatic or hierarchical authority as a court of appeal on doctrine. What he has in mind is the immanent authority of the Church, as seen by him, as a witness to the truth of the Christian religion. In other words Augustine was in a sense a Catholic before he became a Christian. This being so, his Catholic Churchmanship was not only a matter of intellectual conviction but of a deep habitual emotion. He owed his whole self to his conversion, and his conversion he owed to the silent argument of the Catholic Church. By the Church is inspired all that incomparable warmth of love, gratitude, compunction, ineffable yearning of the inmost soul, which speaks to God in the Confessions. This passion of devotion to the Catholic Church, then, was inspired in Augustine not by an idea, but by a visible fact, by the life of a visible society, which worked upon him at first from without, but afterwards as an inward personal experience. 1

The consequences of this devotion are plain. The Church is the ark of salvation, "outside of the Church there is no salvation": these were commonplaces in the African Church of S. Cyprian, and Augustine naturally accepted them as part of his Catholic heritage. How then was it possible for Augustine even to consider such views as we have seen above, of a Predestination of God so particular that some members of the Catholic Church may be non-elect and go down to damnation, while others who have lived before Christ's coming are chosen for eternal salvation? How is such tacit denial of the saving Grace of the sacraments possible in the mind of a man so obviously, and sincerely, attached to a

1
Robertson, op. cit., pp. 185-186.

sacramental Church? Here at last we see the decisive power of the doctrine of Grace which Augustine held, and which we considered in detail in the first chapter. For it is the uncompromising doctrine of Grace which results in the rigid doctrine of Predestination, which is at such chaotic variance with all the teaching of the Catholic Church which Augustine had received. Let us consider more closely how this doctrine of Grace operated with respect to the doctrine of the Catholic Church as the Kingdom of God.

The different operations of Grace were noted in the first chapter, and these were considered almost different "kinds" of the one Grace: prevenient, concomitant, of perseverance, etc. The decisive operation of Grace is that of perseverance, as will be seen in the following passage. Of all Augustine's writings, it is the one in which the doctrine of Predestination is most fully worked out.

[Of the predestined to eternal life] if there are any whose faith fails, it is restored before their life is ended, and the iniquity which has intervened is done away, and perseverance even to the end is allotted to them. But they who are not to persevere, and who shall so fall away from Christian faith and conduct that the end of this life shall find them in that case beyond all doubt are not to be reckoned in the number of these, even in that season when they are living well and piously.¹ For they are not made to differ from that mass of perdi-

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It is to be noted that for Augustine, as for the rest of Catholic teaching, the decision as to salvation or damnation is made by the end of a man's life. Any who are exceptions to this rule, who are given "another chance" after their death, are those who may perhaps be saved by

tion by the foreknowledge and predestination of God, and therefore are not called according to God's purpose, and thus are not elected; but are called among those of whom it was said, "Many are called," not among those of whom it was said, "but few are chosen." And yet who can deny that they are elect, since they believe and are baptized, and live according to God? Manifestly, they are called elect by those who are ignorant of what they shall be, but not by Him who knew that they would not have the perseverance which leads the elect forward into the blessed life, and knows that they so stand, as He has foreknown that they will fall. 1

The consequences of this view are disturbing:

It follows from this position that there are two kinds of predestination, namely, (1) predestination to faith, baptism and membership in the Church in this life; (2) predestination to salvation in the life to come, sealed by the bestowal of the grace of final perseverance... The totality of mankind may on this hypothesis be viewed under the figure of three concentric circles: the outermost, and by far the broadest, circular band being filled by the "vessels of wrath", for whom nothing is done, and who are simply left in the "mass of damnation", subject through original sin to God's avenging justice: the next innermost containing those who are temporarily picked out of the massa damnata by the grace of justification, but who are not granted the grace of final perseverance, with the result that sooner or later they slip back through actual sin into their former lost condition: and the central nucleus embodying the "vessels of mercy", the Divine favorites who are permanently elected out of the sinful mass, brought to faith and baptism, justified and endowed with the gift of final perseverance, and predestined to glory. 2

It is these last who are the "few chosen" in contrast with

"invincible ignorance"; I do not find such exceptions, however, anywhere in Augustine's doctrine.

1 De Correptione et Gratia, 16.

2 Williams, Grace of God, pp. 24-25.

the intermediate ring of the "many called."

If this doctrine seems terrible, unChristian, even immoral, particularly that part of it concerned with the "non-congruous" vocation by which a man is called by God in such a way that he will not heed the call, it may be so. Although I think that S. Augustine was absolutely right in considering it a legitimate development of the Pauline doctrine, and that it has too often been condemned without real consideration, I am not concerned with defending it. It is my purpose merely to point out that it is a view that is one of the two dominant factors in Augustine's thought, the other being his sacramental Catholicism. I cannot state too emphatically that both are true to his thought, and that one or the other or both, is the key to almost every statement he makes with regard to the interpretation of the Kingdom of God as the Church. I think that the two views represent a true dialectic: two ideas, mutually incompatible, are yet both true, and can be synthesized only in some higher term. Yet Augustine did not synthesize them in his writing, and I doubt if any synthesis is possible to the mind of man: every such effort that has been made has ended¹ in the partial or total exclusion of one side or the other.

¹ The Council of Orange a century after Augustine's death marks the modification of his predestinarian doctrine; the medieval Catholic, and the modern Roman and Anglican churches have pretty well obliterated it; the Reformers greatly modified the ecclesiastical doctrine; their followers (e.g., the New England Calvinists) almost completely obliterated it.

Augustine did not synthesize the views. Any such synthesis is an artificial construction, which while it may be true, is not to be found in any of Augustine's works.

They lie side by side as disparate elements in his mind, incapable of any true synthesis... [Any such synthesis] rests upon no inward principle at all. The teaching, worship and sacraments of the Church are means to an end, namely, the salvation of souls; but between that end and the means there is not in Augustine's theory a true causal connection... Salvation really has its single root in the eternal election of God, elect and non-elect pass it may well be through the same earthly history: in faith, baptism, the corruptio of the Church, the eucharist, they are together side by side, and apparently with the same immediate result; both alike pray for the crowning grace of perseverance, but one is taken and the other left, while the sinner whom a deathbed repentance brings into the Church, and who has never passed through the discipline of the Christian life, may all along have been of the number of the elect from which the other, his faith and piety notwithstanding, has all along been excluded.

Augustine's predestinarianism, then, is at issue with his conception of the visible Catholic Church, known as such to all mankind by her organization, teaching, and worship, as the body which administers the grace of Christ with the sure promise of salvation to those who belong to her in heart and soul, and faithfully use her means of grace. 1

To sum up: to S. Augustine there are three fundamental interpretations of the Kingdom of God, all of which are true:

1. The Eschatological Kingdom. That which will be completed at the end of time, when all the elect of God are finally brought together, and the old heaven and old earth

¹ Robertson, op. cit., pp. 201-02.

shall pass away, and a new heaven and a new earth replace them. This is the one view upon which he (and the whole Church) never wavers, and which must always be asserted.

The Kingdom of God on Earth. The elect members of the Eschatological Kingdom are continually being collected together, drawn out of the present world in preparation for the future. Thus there is a true, though soiled and wrinkled, representation of the Kingdom of God on earth. It may be considered in two ways, both true, and each incompatible with the other:

2. The Catholic Church. The external communion of Christians, with the Church's sacraments, conduct, and fellowship.

3. The Invisible Body of the Elect.¹ The total number of those who are called by God, given the gift of perseverance, and called congruently; known only to God, and bearing no causal relationship to the Church.

The last is the view which alone satisfies Augustine's doctrine of the Kingdom, but he does not draw the line strictly.

[He] is constantly passing from the ideal to the phenomenal, and he is constantly applying, ideally, to the

¹ The membership of the Church will in practice, of course, be almost co-terminous with the membership of the Invisible Body of the Elect.

externa communio of the Church conceptions derived from the consideration of the communio sanctorum, the unalterable number of the elect. Hence the visible hierarchically organized Church acquires in his thought and language much of the ideal character of the Kingdom of God. 1

It will now be plain, I think, that Augustine's doctrine of Grace is the determinant of his doctrine of the Kingdom. In the first place, as we have shown, all his doctrine rests upon an all-pervading faith in, and fear of, God. God's action is the motivant everywhere; God's action is His Grace. Secondly, the Eschatological Kingdom, which is always primary, can come about only through the gracious action of the God who created and sustains the universe. Thirdly, and this was a new emphasis which Augustine gave the whole Western Church, the sacraments of the Church are held in a deeper sense, surrounded by an aura of Grace, preventing, disposing, concomitant, which enhanced the Grace of the sacrament itself. Fourthly, the Invisible Body of the Elect is a concept which is completely dominated by the Grace of God; no other consideration can possibly have any effect. Finally, the fact that this Grace-pervaded doctrine of predestination was the one great complicating factor in Augustine's thought, that which changed his contemporary Catholicism into that great structure of doctrine known as "Augustinianism", and gave the impetus to fifteen hundred years of

thought on both Grace and the Kingdom, that fact is evidence of the part that Grace plays in his doctrine. Thus it has been shown that in S. Augustine, a full and noble doctrine of Grace goes hand in hand with, and is inextricable from, a full and rich doctrine of the Kingdom of God.

It remains to examine some of the relations Augustine perceived to exist between the Kingdom of God and the kingdom of the world, to see if his doctrine has anything of value to us in the modern world.



CHAPTER III

S. AUGUSTINE'S DOCTRINE OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD ON EARTH

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What is the Kingdom of God on earth? We have heard much of it in the last fifty years from modern Liberalism, and the importance of discussing the question is not to be denied. The only objection that may be raised is whether or no the proponents of the "Social Gospel" of modern Liberalism know whereof they speak, or are dignifying by the name "Gospel" a social program which has its roots elsewhere than in Christianity. Augustine had a good deal to say upon this question, even though he did live at a time when he could not appreciate the complexity or the mechanical accomplishments of the modern world; nevertheless, some of his thoughts on the subject have pertinence for the present. Most of his discussion is contained in his great work The City of God, and upon that we shall concentrate our attention in this chapter.

The "Kingdom" of God has two basic meanings in Augustine's, or I believe, in anyone's doctrine, if that doctrine is truly Christian. They are: (1) The "Kingship" or "Regnum" of God, ruling the world, omnipotent over all, Lord of life and death and of all creation; (2) The "Kingdom" of God, as a definite place or institution, a State of which God is Head over all, a State in distinction from all other

states. We have carefully studied both of these in the last chapters, and come to the following conclusions: The "Kingship" of God is upheld strongly by Augustine in his doctrine of Grace and Predestination, one side of his dialectic; the "Kingdom" of God is upheld quite as strongly in his doctrine of the Church; yet he does not strictly identify the Church with the Kingdom (with some exceptions) but rather sees the "Kingdom" as a perfect Eschatological Kingdom being prepared during this life, of which the earthly Catholic Church is the soiled and wrinkled counterpart here on earth, in some kind of continuity (not identity) with the true Kingdom. The full meaning of this non-identical continuity of the Church with the Eschatological Kingdom is drawn out in the City of God, where the Eschatological Kingdom is called (and will herein be called) the "City of God", in contrast with the "City of the World", or the "City of the Devil."

Now just here is the relation of Augustine's doctrine to the modern "Social Gospel": where he found a continual and almost complete opposition between the two "Cities", the "Social Gospel" sees the City of God as the City of Earth written large, purified and ennobled, where the evangelical command to love thy neighbor is obeyed, and where thereby the "Kingship" of God is established without the need of the final cataclysmic Day of Judgment. I think this is a fair statement, and with that in mind we will

proceed to examine the relationships between the two Cities as Augustine conceived them.

First we shall observe Augustine's own statement of the occasion of his writing The City of God:

Rome having been stormed and sacked by the Goths under Alaric their king, the pagans made an attempt to attribute this calamity to the Christian religion, and began to blaspheme the true God with even more than their wonted bitterness and acerbity. It was this which kindled my zeal for the house of God, and prompted me to undertake the defence of the city of God...This work was in my hands for several years, owing to the interruptions caused by many other affairs...However, this great undertaking was at last completed in twenty-two books. Of these, the first five refute those who fancy that the polytheistic worship is necessary in order to secure worldly prosperity...In the following five books I address myself to those who admit that such calamities have at all times attended...the human race,...but while admitting this, maintain that the worship of the gods is advantageous for the life to come...The second part of this work...comprises twelve books...The first four contain an account of the origins of these two cities--the city of God and the city of the world. The second four treat of their history or progress; the third and last four, of their deserved destinies. And so, although all these twenty-two books refer to both cities, yet I have named them after the better city, and called them The City of God. 1

Thus the book came directly out of the turmoil and desolation of eternal Rome, and was forced to wrestle with the most profound problems of human history. Augustine met the challenge squarely and wrote the work which has been the most influential of all his writings. He wrote the first real

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Retractationes, II:43; quoted in Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, vol. II, p. xi.

philosophy of history with a vision which takes in both the most insignificant historical fact and the grandest sweep of the whole view of the history of creation. In contrast to the failure of the Empire he sees the quiet gathering strength of God's Empire; he sees that human history is not entirely explicable in terms of human empires, but only fully in terms of the City of God. He demonstrates that the superior morality, leadership, and thought of the Christian city assure it of success even were it not backed up by God's overpowering Grace. He is well aware of where the good in the earthly city resides (in the mighty development of the concept of Justice) and he sees how that good is practically evil in contrast to the goodness of the heavenly city. In the course of the work he passes in review most of the doctrines of Christianity, from that of Creation to that of the Last Things. In summary, the argument may be stated thus:

There are two communities whose origin is traced back six thousand years to the beginnings of the race. One is the City of God, the other is the city of the world. The former begins with Abel; the latter with Cain, of whom it was significantly said that "he built a city". The one is composed of the people of God, led forward from age to age, through the old dispensation, and under the new, and destined to attain to everlasting blessedness. The other is composed of the wicked, consisting both of the flagrantly bad, but also of the virtuous according to human estimation, such as patriots, heroes and sages, who are nevertheless without love to God. The end of the members of the civitas terrena is eternal misery... Secular society, the institutions of human government, are in their origin tainted with evil. Their necessity and their use are conditioned on the introduction and spread of sin. Under this pre-supposition, human government, the government of the Roman Empire, has a rightful

existence, and is ordained of God. But the Church [with considerable qualification, as we shall see] is the civitas Dei, which the State is bound to protect and uphold, even to the extent of exercising coercion against heretics and assailants of its legitimate authority. The end of the world is a final conflagration which is followed by a new world, the abode of the righteous, the heirs of salvation. 1

What are the relations existing between the two cities? We shall consider first the origin, life, and end of each, then their possible identification with the Catholic Church and the temporal State, finally their relations of dependence or independence.

The two cities find their origin at the beginning of the world, with the differentiation of the angels into the good and evil, the friends and the enemies of God. Some of the angels remained true to God's will, others set themselves up over against it, in the primal sin of pride.

While some stedfastly continued in that which was the common good of all, namely in God Himself, and in His eternity, truth, and love; others, being enamored rather of their own power, as if they could be their own good, lapsed into this private good of their own, from that higher and beatific good which was common to all, and bartering the lofty dignity of eternity for the inflation of pride, the most assured verity for the slyness of vanity, uniting love for factious partisanship, they became proud, deceived, envious. The cause therefore of the blessedness of the good is adherence to God. And so the cause of the others' misery...is in their not adhering to God. 2

1 Fisher, History of Christian Doctrine, p. 182.

2 De Civitate Dei, XII:1.

It is to be observed that from the foundation of the world this division of all creation has existed, beginning with the fall of the angels. Thus the two cities represent, from the beginning, two divergent principles: the love of God and the love of self.¹ Pride is the root cause of the existence of the earthly city.

Pride too is not the fault of him who delegates power, nor of power itself, but of the soul that is inordinately enamored of its own power, and despises the more just dominion of a higher authority.²

Augustine will not admit that either angels or men sinned against God's will, but says that God left the power to sin with them, so that both might see how much evil their pride could work, and how much good God's Grace could work in turn.³ Thus in the course of his argument it is seen that the doctrines of the Incarnation and Atonement have as large a place as that of Creation.

In the course of time God created the first man and woman, and as it is recorded in Genesis, they too fell after the manner of the angels, and for the same cause. From them the whole race is derived, all men being their children:

Some of them to be associated with the good angels in their reward, others with the wicked in punishment: all being ordered by the secret yet just judgment of God.⁴

¹ De Civitate Dei, XIV:28.

² Ibid., XII:8.

³ Ibid., XIV:27.

⁴ Ibid., XII:27.

Their fall resulted in the corruption of the human flesh, in such a way that it became subject to sin and death for all its offspring. This division of men has continued ever since in the children of Adam, beginning with Cain who was the exemplar of the city of men and Abel of the city of God. From the first it is seen that some men have been raised from the mass of perdition by God's Grace, since they are predestined to eternal life, while the rest, God's non-election,¹ are predestined to eternal damnation. Enough has been said on this point in the last two chapters. The earthly city continued after Cain through his descendants, the tower of Babel, and the great empires of Nineveh, Babylon, Persia, Macedonia, and Rome. The city of God continued after Abel's death through the descendants of Adam's third child, Seth, through Noah, Abraham, the preparation and salvation of Israel, culminating in Christ and the Christians. The life of the two cities is often intimately mingled:

And these two cities are meanwhile mingled, at the end to be severed; against each other mutually in conflict, the one for iniquity, the other for the truth. And sometimes this very temporal mingling bringeth it to pass that certain men belonging to the city Babylon, do order matters belonging to Jerusalem, and again certain men belonging to Jerusalem, do order matters belonging to Babylon. 2

1 Ibid., XV:1.

2 Enarrationes in Psalmis, LXI:6.

For their purposes and operations I can do no better than to summarize Robertson's discussion:

They differ in their inherent purpose. The civitas Dei pursues the pax celestis, while the civitas terrena pursues merely the pax terrena. But the latter is but a futile pursuit so long as the two civitates are viewed strictly and apart. For the earthly civitas has no resources of its own commensurate with its purpose. It can use worldly wisdom and worldly power, but has no command over the moral life. In a word it works its way by force or fraud. Apart from justice--which the earthly city can only possess by borrowing from the civitas Dei, the great Empires of the world have been--nay the earthly Commonwealth, the State per se, is simply--a great brigandage, grande latrocinium. So far then as the separation between the two civitates is absolute, and embodied in distinct societies of men, the State is Babylon, the civitas or regnum diaboli, the Church the civitas Dei.¹

We have already seen how far the Church can be so identified; it remains to see whether the State can be similarly identified with the kingdom of the devil.

These two cities shall live side by side, until the final separation which shall come in the Day of Judgment. Then they will come to the fate that befits them, whether eternal death or eternal life:

They who do not belong to this city of God shall inherit eternal misery, which is also called the second death, because the soul shall then be separated from God its life, and therefore cannot be said to live, and the body shall be subjected to eternal pains. And consequently this second death shall be the more severe, because no death shall terminate it...For in this life, when this conflict (of pain attacking the body) has arisen, either

¹ Robertson, Regnum Dei, p. 210.

pain conquers and death expels the feeling of it, or nature conquers and health expels the pain. But in the world to come the pain continues that it may torment, and the nature endures that it may be sensible of it; and neither ceases to exist, lest punishment also should cease. 1

In that blessed city of God there shall be free will, one in all the citizens, and indivisible in each, delivered from all ill, filled with all good, enjoying indefeasibly the delights of eternal joys, oblivious of sins, oblivious of sufferings, and yet not so oblivious of its deliverance as to be ungrateful to its Deliverer...There shall we be still, and know that He is God; that He is that which we ourselves aspired to when we fell away from Him, and listened to the voice of the seducer, "Ye shall be as gods", and so abandoned God, who would have made us gods, not by deserting Him, but by participating in Him...True honor shall be there, for it shall be denied to none who is worthy nor yielded to any unworthy...True peace shall be there, where no one shall suffer opposition either from himself or from any other...There we shall rest and see, see and love, love and praise. This is what we shall be in the end without end. For what other end do we propose to ourselves than to attain to the kingdom of which there is no end? 2

Is the City of God identical with the Church, and is the City of Earth identical with the State? The key to the question lies in the fact that Augustine was always a Platonist. Thus he found no difficulty in conceiving the existence of a "City" apart from the membership in it, of a universal in separation from its particulars. This was demonstrated in the last chapter in reference to the partial identification of the Church with the Kingdom or City of God.

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De Civitate Dei, XIX:28.

2

Ibid., XXII:30.

Thus there can be many individuals elect by God but outside the Catholic Church; conversely, there may be many accepted and apparently righteous individuals members of the Catholic Church who are not predestined to salvation. As a matter of fact, Augustine often implicitly, and occasionally explicitly identifies the Church with the City of God for all practical purposes. Yet his fundamental thought distinguishes the Catholic Church made up of both elect and reprobate from the universal, invisible City of God made up only of the elect. The Catholic Church is the counter-part on earth of the City of God, and the members of the City of God are in the main prepared and drawn out of the Catholic Church, yet the two are not primarily identified. The Catholic Church is simply invested with the ideal attributes evolved from the consideration of the City of God.

This is no synthesis but a simple transference of predicates from one subject to another; Augustine is not always conscious of the transition; but he speaks¹ rather frequently as though the subjects were the same.

This same only partial identification holds for the Earthly City and the temporal State. There is at least² one place in which he speaks as if the two were identical.

¹ Robertson, op. cit., p. 197.

² In Epistola 138: 16 and 17, the identification is implied; I have been able to discover no other.

The fundamental consideration here is the ideal existence of a City which is the ideal antithesis of the City of God, a City of Unrighteousness. Augustine refers to its particular members, the fallen angels, Adam, Cain, Nineveh, etc., but they seem rather the examples he found in history which¹ proved the existence of the city he held in theory.

The actual State, as it really exists, is something different. It is not absolutely unrighteous. On the contrary, it has a sort of Justitia of its own; and not only so, but the citizens of the heavenly city avail themselves of the aid of this Justitia in the course of their pilgrimage, so that the State is thus, in its way, a coadjutor of the City of God. 2

Thus the State is not entirely the City of the Devil, as the Church is not entirely the City of God; one is a mixed evil, where the other is a mixed good. Augustine even goes so far as to assert in one place that the State could not exist if it were entirely evil, since

There can be no people, and therefore no State, where there is no justice. 3

This is to say exactly the same thing about the State as Augustine does about the Church: that the Church would not exist if it were entirely good, because that would be the end

¹ Even when he traces the beginning of evil to the fall of the angels he is rather finding in Scripture a cause for what he already believes to exist, than observing the existence of the City of Unrighteousness after the fact of the fall of the angels.

² Ernest Barker, editor, The City of God by Saint Augustine, pp. xxv-xxvi.

³ De Civitate Dei, XIX:21.

of time, when all the elect were gathered together and the Church was completely purified and replaced by the Eschatological Kingdom.

It was said that the Catholic Church is sometimes dependent upon the temporal State. In the same way the two Cities are mutually dependent, although the ideal dependence is of the State upon the Church. We have already often seen how the membership of one City is interpenetrated by the membership of the other. Furthermore, the Church is dependent upon the State for all its rights of possession to buildings and property: the civil authority alone can confer property rights.¹ So the City of God is also dependent upon the State, for without those possessions it could not take visible form as its counterpart on earth, the Catholic Church. Augustine often quotes S. Paul to the effect that the Catholic Churchman must obey the law of the civil authority when that law is not opposed to conscience.

But the dependence on the other side is more fundamental, since the Church has only a passing interest in the things of this world, as befits a pilgrim in the process of purification for eternal life. But the State is

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In Joannis Evangelium Tractatus VI:26.

dependent for its very existence upon the City of God. For as in the last quotation from the City of God, above, where Augustine said that no State can exist without some degree of Justice among its citizens, only the City of God can give the State that degree of Justice. So the Earthly City is only a Civitas at all by virtue of its partaking to some degree of the City of God. We have here the same confusion, often noted before, of the ideally-existent Civitas and its temporal counterpart, whether Church or State. Augustine goes even farther: The State, insofar as it exists, manifests some degree of Justice, hence it is in some degree in communication with the Church (as the Church is the earthly counterpart of the City of God, the source of this Justice). The State, insofar as it is in communication with the Church, is to a degree merged in the Church and gives¹ its civil authority to the Church. Now this view of the State as the secular arm of the Church is extremely important, and had profound and far-reaching implications, but is at variance with the other view: that the Church is dependent upon the State for its very possessions. Robertson suggests that there is here but another example of the unreconciled antithesis between Augustine's Platonic philosophy and his practical Churchmanship, yet I see no reason why both

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Epistola CV:5,6; quoted in Robertson, op. cit., p. 213.

views cannot be held together, without resolution.¹

At any rate, as soon as Augustine found it necessary to look upon the State as providing the secular force of the Church in the suppression of heresy and schism great forces were set on foot which modified the course of history ever afterward, and which came to a practical accomplishment in the reign of Pius III and to a logical conclusion in the Counter-Reformation theory of the Church as the Perfect Society.

But whatever practical results followed, it must be remembered that Augustine's primary purpose is to write a philosophy of history, to justify the Church in the eyes of men who thought her responsible for all the temporal evils which had come upon them.

The men of the ancient world had thought in terms of the Civitas Romana as the one and only society; they had deified the Roman Emperor as its living incarnation, and they had thereby given a religious sanction to its claims: they had pent all life--religion, politics, everything--in a single framework. Writing at a time when the framework seemed to be cracking and breaking, S. Augustine says, in effect: "This is not all; nor indeed is it the half of the matter. There is another and a greater society; and it is towards that society that the whole creation moves." The ultimate effect of the City of God is the elimination of the State: it is the enthronement of the Church (or at any rate of the heavenly city which again and again is identified with the Church) as the

¹ The fact that they were not held together by the medieval Church, when the Church assumed to set itself supreme above every other institution in the world resulted in the secularization of the Church which the Reformers so deplored, though their efforts only made things worse.

one and only final society. Rome has fallen; Christ has risen. The process of history is a process making for His kingdom. ¹

This concept was Augustine's greatest contribution to the whole problem of the relation of the City or Kingdom of God to the world; in the last chapter we shall see if it has any relevance for us today.

There remains one other question with which Augustine deals which is of interest to the modern Christian, that is of the possibility of building by human effort, without the overruling Grace of God, the City of God on earth or hereafter. This is a question which Augustine could not have known in precisely its modern form as the "Social Gospel", for that began with Albrecht Ritschl and his characteristic patterns of thought, which we shall discuss in the next section. In addition, his age had not developed such techniques of social control as are known today, and which give a certain plausibility to the doctrines of the "Social Gospel." Nevertheless, Augustine said some things which are, I think, eternal truths which must be considered as the background for any decision upon this subject.

First of all, then, we cannot look for Augustine

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Barker, op. cit., p. xxxii.

to say specifically whether or not the "Social Gospel" is practicable: he knew nothing of it. The best we can hope for is to examine his attitude toward philanthropy, which was the only social form of the Gospel known to Christians until the nineteenth century, and his attitude toward the goodness and meritoriousness of the civil society, which would be the only society in which he would not insist as an axiom on the over-ruling Grace of God. Then, as will be done in the final chapter, we may see if these attitudes have any application by the Christian to the social problems of today.

I understand by the "Social Gospel" and the "Kingdom of God on earth" a reorganization of this present temporal society, accompanied usually by a corresponding change in heart of all its members, such that the Will of God shall prevail in all social and individual relations, where the "Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man" will come to full fruition. (It is fair to say, I think, that of the distinction we have made between the "Kingdom" and the "Kingship" the "Social Gospel" holds to the former, the organized temporal Great Society rather than the all-pervading Will, though the latter may follow after). All will agree that the effort of all men of good will plays a large part in this happy enterprise, but while some hold that God's assisting Grace is necessary and to be expected, others hold that God's Grace is purely incidental and unnecessary,

at best a help over the rough spots. The latter view can be discarded at once, so far as Augustine is concerned. I think that it will be obvious from all our discussion of the need for Grace, and the nature of the Kingdom of God as a predestined society (or its earthly counterpart), that to discard God's Grace altogether is to discard all possibility of any righteous living, whether for Christian or pagan. The former view, which holds that God's Grace is indeed necessary for what is still man's work--in the main, alone need be considered.

Again, it will be obvious from what has gone before that there is no possibility of human effort entering in the least degree to the building of the ideal, predestinarian, City of God. That is God's province entire, and no lesser will can have the slightest influence. On the other hand, the "Social Gospel" can have no concern with the ideal, predestinarian City of the Devil, where in opposition to God no good is to be found but only absolute evil. For the "Social Gospel" is concerned with that which is good, both humanely and theologically. Of the four possibilities of societies, ideal and actual, which Augustine would offer, two remain: the Catholic Church and the temporal State. Aside from questions of where the Catholic Church is now to be found (for the problems are different today from what they were in the time of the unity of Augustine's Catholic Church),

the "Social Gospel" envisages the reformation of temporal society rather than the extension of the government of the Church, Roman or Protestant, to the government of society. Thus we need consider only his discussion of the possibilities of goodness in the State. All references such as the following must be set aside, for the "Social Gospel" refuses concern with "otherworldliness", forgetting that its opposite is "worldliness", about which our Lord said the last word.

Belonging to the world therefore are all mankind, created indeed by the true God, but generated from Adam as a vitiated and condemned stock; and there are made into a kingdom no longer of the world all from thence that have been regenerated in Christ. For so did God rescue us from the power of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of the Son of His love: and of this kingdom it is that He saith, "My kingdom is not of this world." 1

Now citizens are begotten to the earthly city by nature vitiated by sin, but to the heavenly city by grace freeing nature from sin; whence the former are called "vessels of wrath", the latter "vessels of mercy." 2

But to confine our attention to the temporal earthly society, we find that Augustine admits a certain possibility for benevolent and orderly government; the concept of Justitia in the temporal sphere has already been referred to: no society can exist without some degree of Justice. In speaking of the just and virtuous government of

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In Joannis Evangelium Tractatus CXV:2.

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De Civitate Dei, XV:2.

the Roman Republic, he says:

Though they had not the true piety towards the true God which could bring them, by a religion of saving power, to the commonwealth which is eternal, they did nevertheless observe a certain integrity of its own kind, which might suffice for founding, enlarging, and preserving an earthly commonwealth. For in the most opulent and illustrious Empire of Rome, God has shown how great is the influence of even civil virtues without true religion, in order that it might be understood that, when this is added to such virtues, men are made citizens of another commonwealth, of which the king is Truth, the law is Love, and the duration is Eternity. 1

The last sentence of the quotation is the main point, that when the true religion of Christianity is "added to such virtues" and is applied to the conservation and increase of those virtues, as the most Christian forms of the "Social Gospel" would advocate, the result shall be, not a reformed temporal society in which the virtues will reign forever, but that individual men shall be drawn out of the temporal society and prepared for the Eschatological Kingdom which will come at the end of time, of which "the duration is Eternity." The decisive point is Eternity: Augustine is always aware that the earth will pass away, and will be replaced by a new earth, which alone can be eternal. In one place he says that to pursue virtues (social or individual) for their own sake is an evil occupation:

They are rather vices than virtues so long as there is no reference to God in the matter. For although some

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Epistola CXXXVIII:17.

suppose that virtues which have a reference only to themselves, and are desired only on their own account, are yet true and genuine virtues, the fact is that then they are inflated with pride, and are therefore to be reckoned vices rather than virtues. 1

So much for the possibility of religiosity in the civil society. The remaining question is concerning Augustine's attitude toward works of charity, the only "Social Gospel" known to the Catholic Church. On this point of course, he repeats what the Gospel has always said, in the terms S. James first used: "Faith without works is dead." In the first chapter we considered somewhat his attitude toward the relation of Grace to merit and works, and discovered his attitude was that whereas faith and Grace are the determinants of salvation, the man who has no good works is hardly likely to be among the elect, although it may be that he is. All of Augustine's moral treatises are full of admonitions to the moral and spiritual life, to the controlling of the lower nature and to the doing of good works. His treatise On the Work of Monks shows that monastics ought to engage in practical works of charity. The principal work of charity

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De Civitate Dei, XIX:25; this criticism will of course not apply to the best forms of the "Social Gospel", but only to those radical types which tacitly deny the place of God in the social process; the others seriously contemplate the genuine Rule of God's Will, and not man's idea of what ought to be.

the ordinary Christian who is not a religious will do is alms-giving, says Augustine. That is good and proper, but has in itself no power of forgiveness or salvation, if the life of sin is persisted in. Yet true charity, which is impossible without amendment of life, is "efficacious for the deletion of past sins." At any rate, the true Christian will perforce devote his life to the charitable relief of others, by his alms, prayers, and personal help.¹

Aside from the practical possibility of virtue and righteousness in any other place than under the direct and all-powerful control of God, the question of the "Social Gospel" would be to Augustine largely academic. For the dominant motifs, among the many conflicting in his mind, are those of the ruling Grace of God expressed in a predestined choice of the members of the Kingdom of God, drawn out of the Catholic Church here on earth, and in an ultimately complete distinction from all temporal aims and virtues. In only one place does he actually say that the "Kingdom of God on earth" in the sense in which we have been using it is a religious impossibility, but the idea is fundamental to all of his writings.

We are no longer in the times of the Old Testament, expecting a carnal and temporal kingdom of God; and

¹ De Civitate Dei, XXI:27.

all things are become new, making the promise of the kingdom of heaven, where there shall be neither death nor corruption, the ground of our confidence. ¹

Not even the most impassioned defender of the "Social Gospel" has ever promised the abolition of death. For Augustine the view is always to the future beyond death and time, to the new heavens and the new earth, when the trials of this painful temporal existence will be lost in the joy of the undisturbed Vision of God.

If we could summarize Augustine's thought, he would answer the question of the "Social Gospel" in this way, I think: "By means of the new techniques of social control that have been devised and will be devised, there is perhaps the possibility that a State might be created on this earth that would far surpass the really righteous life of the ancient Republic. Yet I feel that such a thing is impossible unless the heart of every member of the State could be changed from his present inherently sinful ways. That is already being accomplished by the Church throughout the world among those who are among God's elect. As those men are perfected, they will undoubtedly leaven the social structure and Christian virtues will increase, but not for the sake of the social structure, or even of those virtues,

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Contra Faustum Manichaeum, XI:8.

but only incidentally. For the Lord has chosen those men not for this world, which will pass away as soon as the solar system burns out, but for the world which He will create at the end of this world. That is the Kingdom of God which God has appointed, and the Church is its means of entrance; while this other is the Kingdom of God which some men have thought up for themselves. You may preach your own 'Social Gospel', but the Lord has called me to preach His Gospel of salvation hereafter, and that requires my full time."

CHAPTER IV

THE RITSCHLIAN DOCTRINES OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND OF THE GRACE OF GOD

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When the Catholic Christian comes for the first time to a consideration of the theology of Albrecht Ritschl, he is likely to put it aside hastily as just another attempt to subvert Christian teaching, and to wonder why anyone could be so concerned over what he considers trifles and yet so negligent of what he considers fund^aamentals. He is likely to oppose the robbing of old terms of their ordinary meaning and their investment with new and to him sub-Christian meanings. Thus, as we shall see, Ritschl's use of "Justification" will seem strange to one accustomed to the Catholic interpretation of Pauline thought. Ritschl's use of the term "the Kingdom of God" will seem strange to one who tends to equate it with the visible Catholic Church. Yet to put Ritschl aside, therefore, without an understanding of his background would be to do the German theologian an injustice.

For Albrecht Ritschl lived at a time when German Christianity was at its lowest intellectual ebb, and he did yeoman service to revive something of the old vitality of Christian thought. At first under the influence of the Tübingen school of Biblical criticism, he saw the depths to which Christian doctrine had been reduced by the efforts of the destructive critics. While he never tired of the

emphasis on the necessity of maintaining the assured findings of criticism, he later abandoned Tübingen and rebelled from their positions. His master-idea was of the Kingdom of Christ, and this he made a touchstone by which all other doctrine was to be tested. His influence was wide, and still persists in two directions: (1) Those theologians and historians (Herrmann and Harnack perhaps outstanding) who made up the now defunct "Ritschlian School" and their spiritual descendants in Germany, England, and the United States. These descendants may be roughly identified as those who still adhere to the Ritschlian method of considering the Kingdom of God on earth as the master-idea in theology. They have practically disappeared in Germany, their influence is considerable in England, but in America Ritschlianism has really come into its own. It is undoubtedly the dominant characteristic of theological thought in contemporary American Protestantism; here Ritschl's followers are legion, even when they are unaware of, or refuse to admit, their indebtedness. Schweitzer and the Eschatological interpretation of the Gospel forced the German abandonment of Ritschlianism, but Ritschl is still the background of all the American proponents of the Kingdom of God on earth from the early "Social Gospel" to the contemporary Bennett, Macintosh, and Niebuhr. (2) His influence is seen even in Schweitzer and the Eschatologists who rebelled at his

inadequate treatment of the eschatological idea in our Lord's teaching, by the mere fact that they too perceived the Kingdom of God (though a different kind of Kingdom, in their thought) to be the master-idea in theology. Not until the appearance of Barthianism was this dominance questioned, though now the doctrine of the Word of God has replaced that of the Kingdom of God.

There are three main considerations in that background which Ritschl brought to the task of his theology. There is first his mistrust of metaphysics, and his conscientious effort to rid theology of all metaphysical implications. His philosophy, learned from Kant and Lotze, is that of value judgments. Thus the nature of Christ is not to be taught as that which the metaphysically-founded doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation decide concerning it (although the Church may continue to hold those doctrines as pre-eminently valuable), but is to be taught in terms of the values the disciples found in Christ as the revelation of God in love, the pattern of what men ought to be, the bearer of God's moral authority, and the founder of the Kingdom of God.

Secondly, from Schleiermacher Ritschl received the idea of the normative value of the religious consciousness, but differed in changing the seat of the religious consciousness from the individual to the religious community. This

community becomes the Kingdom of God which Christ founded, and in which is summed up all of God's relations to men, which are concentrated in the facts of sin and salvation. The Christian life is essentially social, so Redeemer, redeemed, and redeemed community are inseparable concepts.

Thirdly, with Schleiermacher and all the German Mediating School of theology, Ritschl emphasized the centrality of Christ in doctrine and life. When the individual and the society recognize the value of Christ, i.e., His true nature, faith is aroused, which is followed by trust and love of God through Christ. This feeling of trust and love is accompanied by justification and reconciliation (which concepts we shall study). The influence of Ritschl on modern theology will be readily seen at each of these points, in its emphasis on the practical and valuable in the "Social Gospel", on social and collective salvation to the practical exclusion (from consideration, at least) of individual salvation, and the close examination of such words and actions of Jesus Himself as have come down to us.

Ritschl's theological work is centered in one book and one pamphlet, in significant contrast to the great volume of S. Augustine's writings. The book, Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung (Justification and Reconciliation), is the main source of his doctrine, while the pamphlet Unterricht

in der christlichen Religion (Instruction in the Christian Religion) sheds some light in the form of definitions and organization of thought. The title of the book indicates what Ritschl thought was of primary importance in doctrine, for it is about his concept of Justification that his whole summary of Christian doctrine is orientated. In most places (though his meaning is often obscure) he practically identifies the state of Justification with the Kingdom of God, while his doctrine of Grace may be examined in its relation to Justification. Indeed, Grace is almost unheard of except in this connection. Thus we will first examine Ritschl's doctrine of Justification, then his doctrine of the Kingdom of God, and finally his doctrine of Grace. The key importance of the doctrine of the Kingdom will then be made clear.

The following is Ritschl's definition of Justification, which he states is closer than any other to the meaning of the New Testament and the Protestant Reformers:

1. Justification or the forgiveness of sins, as the religious expression of that operation of God upon men which is fundamental in Christianity, is the acceptance of sinners into that fellowship with God in which their salvation is to be realized and carried out into eternal life.
2. Justification is conceivable as the removal of guilt and the consciousness of guilt, in so far as in the latter that contradiction to God which is realized in sin and expressed in guilt, works on as mistrust and brings about moral separation from God.
3. In so far as justification is viewed as effective, it must be conceived as reconciliation, of such a nature that while memory, indeed, preserves the pain

felt at the sin which has been committed, yet at the same time the place of mistrust towards God is taken by the positive assent of the will to God and His saving purpose. ¹

Ritschl expressly dissociates this idea from any doctrine of a Regeneration which is accomplished by a Grace which is God's power and which displaces the will's tendency to evil by love for God. This he considers the error of Catholic and Evangelical theology alike. ² Thus Justification is not making righteous, but declaring righteous, and in effect justification is identified with forgiveness of sins. Yet there is no punishment for sins other than the separation they entail from God, and Ritschl rejects the ideas of Christ's imputed righteousness and any form of substitutory Atonement. Thus reconciliation with God is a subjective human state, and not an "objective divine act in the sacrifice of Christ." Finally, justification is possible only within the Christian community: it is a relation of the body of Christians to God and to the world, rather than of individual sinners. ³

It has been mentioned that Ritschl identifies justification with the Kingdom of God. This comes about through the influence of one of his dominant ideas of the

¹ Rechtf. u. Vers., p.85.

² Ibid., p. 601.

³ Ibid., pp. 607-608; summarized in Garvie, Ritschlian Theology, p. 327.

Kingdom: its "teleological character", that is to say that Christianity is not only a good already attained, but an ideal to be realized. He takes literally our Lord's command to "Seek ye the kingdom." Now Christ's redemption, by which Justification is enabled to come to the community which He founded, is purely one of example and suggestion:

The redemption which He achieved through the maintenance of fidelity in His calling and of His blessed fellowship with God through suffering unto death. ¹

This teleological character of the Kingdom determined Christ's redemption as being directed at men, not in their actual character as sinners, but by their possible destination as citizens of the Kingdom. So men are justified for the purpose of their citizenship, and their justification becomes an entrance into the Kingdom of God. But his root meaning is even more an identification of Justification and the Kingdom than this. For since divine Grace implies and includes human activity (as will later be seen), Justification expresses the aspect of divine Grace, while the Kingdom of God expresses the aspect of human activity: they become the two sides of the same coin, and there is an identification so complete as to be but two different ways of looking at the same thing. Garvie explains the identification thus:

¹ Rechtf. u. Vers., p. 10.

He starts from the traditional position of Christian theologians, for whom the doctrine of redemption is of primary importance; he is drawn by [various] influences ...towards the new position, for which the doctrine of the Kingdom is of supreme interest; and he does not altogether abandon the old before he assumes the new standpoint. 1

This is, I think, a fair explanation of the source of this doctrine.

The clearest definition of the Kingdom of God is contained in the Instruction in the Christian Religion, where he says that the Kingdom is the highest religious good and the perfect moral ideal:

The kingdom of God is the highest good assured by God to the community founded by His revelation in Christ; yet it is regarded as the highest good, only inasmuch as at the same time it is reckoned as the moral ideal, for the realization of which the members of the community bind themselves to one another by a definite mode of reciprocal action. 2

Here the Kingdom of God is not only the "highest good assured by God", which is his concept of Justification and the aspect of divine Grace, but is also the "members of the community binding themselves to one another by reciprocal action", which is the concept of the Kingdom in Justification and Reconciliation and the aspect of human activity. In both the writings Ritschl sees the human activity in the

1 Garvie, op. cit., p. 244.

2 Unterr. i.d. christl. Relig., p. 3; quoted in Garvie, op. cit., pp. 244-245.

Kingdom of God, but in only one does he specifically state the divine Grace, implying that the aspect of human activity and the moral element is primary in his mind, a conclusion which will be corroborated in our discussion of his doctrine of Grace. But it is only fair to state that the action of divine Grace (which yet always includes human activity) is always implied, even when not stated, because entrance to the Kingdom is by Justification, which is the work of Christ's redemption, which involves the Grace of God.

Other effects of the teleological character of the doctrine of the Kingdom are its effects on the doctrines of creation, revelation, and the Person and Work of Christ.

Creation is to be considered by [the Ritschlian method] only in so far as it is a means toward God's final purpose, the kingdom of God. Revelation is the historical realization of the kingdom of God. Christ's Person and Work are to be investigated only in so far as He is founder of the Kingdom of God, and by His redemption makes it possible for men to become citizens of the kingdom. 1

The self-imposed limitations of this method, like those of the refusal to admit metaphysics, are obvious.

The communal emphasis in the doctrine of the Kingdom is as prominent as the teleological. Although Ritschl sees² the Kingdom as both the highest religious good of the

1 Garvie, op. cit., p.250.

2 Vide supra, p. 84.

process of Justification, and as the moral ideal of human social organization after the law of love, the latter is dominant as we have seen. The effect is for the religious good to tend to disappear.

The individual's religious position is made dependent on his moral function; his value is not in himself, but in his service to society; he enjoys his religious good as he discharges his moral duty. A man is not justified by God and as a result loves his neighbor, but it is as he loves his neighbor that he is justified by God. ¹

Thus God knows and loves men as individuals only as they are related to each other in their families, nations, or other collective groups. Justification belongs itself to the community and is given to an individual only as a member of the community. This is, of course, a far cry from the Christian Gospel, which has been from New Testament times primarily a salvation of the individual, with the moral relationship expressed between the individual and God first, but only derivatively between individual man and other men. If it be compared with the doctrine of S. Augustine already studied, two objections would be obvious: (1) It is entirely unChristian, a reversion to paganism, to think of Justification in terms of a reward for merit or good works. Religion dependent upon morality is no religion. S. Augustine spent many years wrestling with the Pelagians on this point. (2) To

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Garvie, op. cit., p. 251.

over-emphasize the communal aspect of the Kingdom is to neglect the individual element, which is as important. Even with the Platonic tendency that is behind all his writing (and which might lead to emphasis on the community), Augustine would always see the Kingdom as the sum of the individuals whom God had individually raised from the mass of perdition. The communal aspect is there, and is true, but is only secondary.

The effect of this theoretical communality would seem to bode well for the Church, if the Church were identified with the Christian community. But it is so identified in only a small degree (only when the Christian community is worshipping is it the visible Church). A parallel may be seen in the thought of John Calvin, who held to a very high doctrine of the Church, theoretically castigating schismatics, yet who himself organized a schismatic body.

In this matter of the relation of the Kingdom of God to the visible Church, Ritschl's thought is perfectly plain. The followers of Christ (the Christian community) are to be distinguished under two aspects: when engaged in moral activity they may be called the Kingdom of God; when they are engaged in devotional activity, as the "worshipping community",¹ they are the Church. The Christian life, then, is a life in

¹ Rechtf. u. Vers., pp. 284-285.

a community which is both the Kingdom of God and the Church. The distinction is fundamentally between moral and devotional activity. As Ritschl distinguishes them:

Those who believe in Christ [the Christian community], therefore, constitute a Church in so far as they express in prayer their faith in God the Father, or present themselves to God as men who through Christ are well-pleasing to Him. The same believers in Christ constitute the Kingdom of God in so far as, forgetting distinctions of sex, race, or nationality, they act reciprocally from love, and thus call into existence that fellowship of moral disposition and moral blessings which extends, through all possible gradations, to the limits of the human race. 1

One is an object of observation; the other is an object of faith:

The fellowship of Christians for the purpose of religious worship manifests itself in the sphere of sense, and therefore betrays its peculiar nature to every observer. On the other hand, the moral Kingdom of God, even while it manifests itself sensibly in action, as a whole reveals its peculiar nature to Christian faith alone. 2

One is organized according to human standards; the other uses organization only for convenience:

The fellowship of Christians for worship gives rise to legal ordinances which it requires for its own sake; but the Kingdom of God, while not injuriously affected by the fact that moral action under certain circumstances assumes the garb of legal forms, does not in the least depend on them for its continued existence. 3

1 Ibid., p. 285.

2 Loc. cit.

3 Loc. cit.

At this point he criticizes Augustine severely for identifying the Catholic Church with the Kingdom of God, without apparently being aware of the other side of Augustine's doctrine which we have seen so amply; he calls this "Augustinian" doctrine a "fatally erroneous opinion." His criticism is correct, of course, if applied to the one-sided adaptation of Augustine that was developed by the medieval Papacy, and no doubt he has this in mind rather than the whole of ¹ Augustine's statements.

There is indeed a certain resemblance to Augustine's doctrine in Ritschl's theory of the relations of the Church and the Kingdom. The great difference lies in the fact that both words mean radically different things for the two men, but the relations between the ideas are similar. Thus Augustine saw the Church as the visible embodiment of the Kingdom of God; Ritschl does so also, while confining it to the activity of worship. Augustine saw the Kingdom as an ideal existent, made up of the elect (therefore the justified) known only to God; Ritschl does so likewise, while it is made up of those who have true faith in God and are justified. Nevertheless, the meaning of the words is the important thing, and Ritschl greatly changed these

¹ Ibid., p. 286.

meanings: as a product of the Reformation, he changed the meaning of "Church", as an independent theologian, the meaning of "Kingdom."

In the Instruction in the Christian Religion Ritschl treats fully of his idea of the actual process by which the Church worships. His doctrine here is ordinary Reformation Protestantism, with two sacraments, the priesthood of all believers, indifference as to external organization of the Church, and unconcern with symbols, discipline, and polity. He holds the Church "as an object of faith" to be:

The communion of believers in the Holy Spirit; the sphere which is marked out by the forgiveness of sin. ¹

One practical deduction from his communal emphasis may be observed in his defense of infant baptism: to insist on adult baptism is erroneous, because it assumes that Christian character can be developed outside the community.

In summary, then, it may be said that the Kingdom of God is an end to be realized, and is communal in nature. Sometimes it is identified, as another aspect of the same thing, with Justification; at other times Justification is the entrance to the Kingdom. It is primarily the highest religious good: Justification, and the perfect moral ideal:

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Unterr. i. d. christl. Relig., p. 72; quoted in Garvie, op. cit., p. 336, et passim.

human social activity in love; with the latter dominating. The Kingdom of God bears certain definite relations to the Church. Their memberships are the same, the believers in Christ, whose membership whether in Church or in Kingdom is distinguished by their activities. These believers in Christ are first of all members of the Christian community; secondarily, when they are engaged in the worship of God they are members of the Church, and when they are engaged in works of love--wherever to be found--they are members of the Kingdom of God. The Church is visible to the sight and is regulated by human ordinances, while the Kingdom is visible only to faith and needs no ordinances for its existence, but only its foundation and representation by Christ.

In conclusion, and in preparation for the study of the Ritschlian doctrine of Grace, we may consider the relations of God with the "Christian community", i.e., both the Church and the Kingdom, and the functions of that Christian community.

All Catholic theology, and most Reformation theology, has always held that some kind of regeneration by God's Grace, whether or not sacramentally, is necessary for entrance into the true Christian community. Ritschl agrees, but only by robbing regeneration of all meaning other than the revelation of God's Grace (His gracious nature, rather than His powerful activity) to the individual through the

community: it is a communication of moral knowledge (which is Faith) indistinguishable as a process from Justification:

Thus regeneration...cannot as a predicate of the individual believer be materially distinguished from effectual justification or reconciliation or adoption. 1

The concept is so devoid of meaning that it is generally spoken of only casually in connection with Justification, and in reference only to the community. In conclusion, he says:

Regarding the justification and regeneration of the individual, then, nothing further can be objectively taught than that it takes place within the community of believers as a result of the propagation of the Gospel and the continuous specific action of Christ's personal character in His community, through the awakening in the individual of faith in Christ as trust in God as Father and of the sense of union rooted in the Holy Spirit, by which are dominated our whole view of the world and estimate of self, despite the continuance of the sense of guilt. How this state is brought about eludes all observation, like the development of the individual spiritual life in general. 2

This denial of the power of God's Grace is fully to be seen in the powerless, merely moral control of God over the community, and the confining of the Work of Christ to the mere memory of His sterling character. Whereas almost all Christian theologians have agreed (as we have seen of S. Augustine) that whether Grace is the Holy Spirit or is a substance

1 Rechtf. u. Vers., p. 600.

2 Ibid., p. 607.

given by the Holy Spirit, the Christian community--whether Church or Kingdom, or both--is ruled by the Holy Spirit of God. But in Ritschl, by the quotation above, the Holy Spirit in operation in the community is nothing more than the community's sense of union among its members and with God. We shall refer to this deficiency later. Now it remains to see just how God works in the Christian community through this new definition of the Holy Spirit. Ritschl's denial of metaphysics, and hence of the basis for the Christian doctrine of the Holy Trinity, is to be borne in mind here:

The Spirit of God, or the Holy Spirit, who in relation to God Himself is the knowledge which God has of Himself, is at the same time an attribute of the Christian community, because the latter, in accordance with the completed revelation of God through Christ, has that knowledge of God and of His counsel for men in the world which harmonizes with God's self-knowledge. The Holy Spirit, however, as the power of the complete knowledge of God which is common to believers in Christ, is at the same time the motive-power of the life of all Christians--a life which, as such, is necessarily directed to the common end of the Kingdom of God. If, then,...the state of regeneration...[be] brought into immediate relation to the Holy Spirit, that [regeneration] is to be understood as meaning, not that each individual is changed by the specific power of God in the form of a natural force, but that he is moved to patience and humility, as well as to moral activity in the service of the Kingdom of God, by that trust in God as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ which is common to all Christians. For this reason it is not permissible for any man to determine his relation to the Holy Spirit by observation of himself in which he isolates himself from all others. 1

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Ibid., pp. 605-06.

In justice to Ritschl, it should be pointed out that he immediately states that he makes no further claims as to the Holy Spirit for fear of hurting the consciences of "fanatical sectarians" whom a fuller definition might exclude from possession of the Spirit (who is the Spirit opposed to disunion). This is hardly a reason, however, which should apply to the task of discovering the truth of Christian dogmatics. The important point is that God works in the Christian community as Motive: directed to the realization of the Kingdom, and as Knowledge of Himself: granted to the community through Christ who founded it. The revelation of God by Christ enables the community to share God's knowledge of Himself, which is His Spirit, and the individual partakes of this knowledge (and indeed, also of the motive) only in the community which he enters by regeneration (which is Justification and the awakening of faith in Christ) which in turn is the sensing of "union with God rooted in the Holy Spirit." Thus are Pelagianism, synergism, and Atonement by impartation of knowledge rolled into one.

In conclusion, we may briefly outline the functions of the Christian community. One function is to work for the realization of the final end of the Kingdom of God: dominion over the world, "a system of united human action", by which the members of the community will be above all pains, sorrows, and limitations of this sub-spiritual world,

so that "the sense of all natural or social evils" is changed¹ into the feeling of dominion over them. But this is not to be separated from direct moral action in the social realm. Ritschl's philosophic distinction of "theoretical judgments" from "value judgments" applies here. Whereas science operates by the former, religion operates by the latter and is able to give direction to science for the amelioration of social evils and the eventual elimination of them. Here the "Social Gospel" is seen in its inception. Yet Ritschl does not ever see the religious man as being so immersed in the development of his character by social activity that he forgets that the spiritual must always dominate the material. "He has dominion over the world because its favors do not allure him, and its displeasure does not dismay him."²

Another function of the Christian community close to the last is its expression of faith in God's Providence through patience and humility. Patience is "the feeling which views the evils of life in the light of Divine providence,"³ and humility is the "feeling of submission to God."⁴ Both are to be maintained, and are evidences of faith.⁵

¹ Ibid., pp. 610-11.

² Garvie, op. cit., p. 350.

³ Rechtf. u. Vers., p. 627.

⁴ Ibid., p. 637

⁵ Loc. Cit.

A third function of the Christian community is prayer to God, as an expression of faith. Here, as seen above, we have the Christian community becoming the Church as it worships God. Prayer is an expression of our faith in God's providence, which is the second function of the community. Ritschl limits prayer to thanksgiving and submission, corresponding to patience and humility. Petition,¹ he says, is really a form of thanksgiving. The question remains whether our Lord meant submission to God's will to go so far as this, particularly hand in hand with the claim of man to save himself.

The final function of the Christian community is similar to the first, and as we have seen hinted at before, is by all means the most important. That is "moral conduct in a social vocation." The three former were what Ritschl would call "specifically religious" functions, and all three apply more particularly to the Christian community as Church, while this last applies to it as Kingdom. It is by this means that the Kingdom of God on earth is realized, and the law of love is fulfilled. He makes much of individual morality as being summed up in "perfect fidelity to our calling", and finds much inspiration here in the example of

¹ Ibid., p. 644.

Christ. His sinlessness is rather beside the point, according to Ritschl, for to say that Christ more perfectly than any other fulfilled His calling perfectly and faithfully is to say all that is known about Him.¹ And the individual's calling must be exercised in fellowship with God and his fellow-man. Thus he will come to blessedness, and it is on this note that Ritschl ends his work. This to him is the conclusion of dogmatics, corresponding to what in Catholic dogmatics is called "Eschatology"; this is eternal life:

The freedom of action in the form of a special moral vocation which, motivated by the universal final end of the Kingdom of God, imposes a law upon itself by the production of principles and judgments of duty, and serves to confirm the appropriation of reconciliation, forms, together with the foregoing religious functions, that perfection invested with which each believer must show himself to be a whole or a character which occupies a permanent place in the Kingdom of God and enjoys a practical experience of eternal life.²

This^{is} eternal life and the Vision of God: the action of man himself, duty as the highest aspiration of moral action, and eternal life conceived in terms of "practical experience."

In conclusion, we may note an interesting parallelism in the thought of Ritschl and S. Augustine. In the last chapter we drew out some of the meaning that Augustine attached to his idea of the "Earthly Kingdom" in opposition to the "Kingdom of God." In the theology of Ritschl there is a similar opposition, between the Kingdom of God

¹ Ibid., p. 665

² Ibid., p. 670.

and what he calls the "Kingdom of Sin." He agrees that sin is a breach of righteousness, but righteousness is not of law, but of purpose. This is consistent with his general teleological emphasis. Thus the righteousness of God finds expression in God's purpose, and of man in his own purpose, which is known to man only in Christ's revelation of the Kingdom of God. As the nature of sin can be seen only by contrast with the nature of its opposite good,

As the compass and obligatoriness of the good first come out into full cognizability in the task of the Kingdom of God, especially as that task was faultlessly discharged in the life-course of Jesus, so likewise sin can only be understood as the contrary of this, the highest moral good. ¹

He denies original sin in effect, but substitutes for it the collective weight of habitual sins, and the subject of habitual sin is "humanity as the sum of all individuals", insofar as the selfish action of each person leads him to associate with others in common evil. ² This goes on all the time in every department of life, and may be called the Kingdom of Sin, "all the grades of habitual sin included in the vast complex of sinful action."

And indeed we can only regard ourselves as sharing its guilt when we not only attribute to ourselves our own sinful actions as such, but at the same time calculate how they produce sin in others also,...

¹ Ibid., p. 329.

² Ibid., p. 335.

This form of sinful federation with others, however, affects everyone, at least in this way that we become accustomed to standing forms of sin, at any rate in others, and acquiesce in them. ¹

It will be recalled that Pelagius had a very similar view of the cumulative effects of actual sin, which he pointed to in the place of original sin. Nevertheless, the thought is similar to Augustine's, insofar as there is actually existing a "Kingdom of Sin" in opposition to the "Kingdom of God", and which will in the end be overcome by the Kingdom of God.

Having completed our consideration of Ritschl's doctrine of the Kingdom of God, we will shortly consider his doctrine of Grace, and bringing together such observations as have already been made and drawing out its character, see if there is a comprehensible relationship existing between it and the doctrine of the Kingdom--as we saw there was between the two in the doctrine of S. Augustine.

The fundamental fact about the Ritschlian doctrine of Grace is its extreme deficiency: its reliance upon man rather than upon God and its apparently total inability to conceive of God as really regnant, Almighty, over His creation. The tone is set in the first few pages of Justification and Reconciliation when Ritschl speaks of the Holy

¹ Ibid., p. 338.

Spirit of God (remembering that Augustine considered the Spirit to be either Grace or the source of Grace):

We must give up the question...how man is laid hold of, or pervaded, or filled by the Holy Spirit. What we have to do is rather to verify life in the Holy Spirit by showing that believers know God's gracious gifts, that they call on God as their Father, that they act with love and joy, with meekness and self-control, that they are on their guard above all against party spirit, and cherish rather a spirit of union. In these statements the Holy Spirit is not denied, but recognized and understood. 1

Such phrases as "What we have to do..." recur constantly. "Calling on God as Father" is mentioned, but seems to mean only the recognition of that fact from the human side. We have already seen how the Holy Spirit is involved in the impartation to the community of the knowledge of God's love.

He denies the possibility of any knowledge of the objective action of Grace:

Rules for the objective operation of Divine grace upon individuals are not to be found, the less so as the relations between men and God always manifest themselves in experience solely in the form of subjective self-consciousness. 2

What a theologian thinks of sin is a good indication of the place he ascribes to Grace: the more heinous and deep-rooted sin is thought to be, the more likelihood there is for a strong doctrine of Grace to accompany it.

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Ibid., pp. 22-23.

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Ibid., p. 607.

Ritschl denied original sin, on the ground that it implies an original righteousness before sin, which would detract from Christ's place as the ²determinant of all Christian ¹theology. Actual sin, as we have seen above, is known by comparison with the highest good of the Kingdom of God, and hence is to be known and judged by men in accordance with the divine judgment. ²Yet there is no universal necessity to sin to be inferred either from man's nature or God's ³purpose. He often speaks of sin as a mere rigidity at the present stage of human development:

It is an apparently inevitable product of the human will under the given conditions of its development, but conscious as we are of our freedom and independence, is nevertheless reckoned by us as guilt. ⁴

Yet sin and guilt are realities.

Sin is the act of opposition of freedom to law, and guilt is the state of disturbance of man's relation to God. ⁵

But this disturbance, which is called guilt, is entirely a subjective matter: one feels badly that he has sinned; this bad feeling tends to alienation from God's love; in

¹ Ibid., p. 337.

² Ibid., p. 381.

³ Unterr. i. d. christl. Relig., p. 26; quoted in Garvie, op. cit., p. 300, note 2.

⁴ Rechtf. u. Vers., p. 380.

⁵ Garvie, op. cit., p. 299.

time, the relation of adopted sonship may be broken by bad feeling: this is guilt. Christ died to break down the feeling of guilt by showing what man was able to do.

It might be suggested that Ritschl's doctrine of sin implies an immaturity in his religious experience. Forgiveness does not close the books, as he everywhere seems to think, for sin is far deeper and more polluting than he knows, and its subjective effects last on even after justification. Also, sin and justification are surely facts of more objective importance than Ritschl seems to know. And his assertions of freedom, by which he avoids a more weighty doctrine of sin, seem to indicate freedom from God as well as from sin:

The love of God to sinners as the motive of His purpose of redemption, and as the ultimate efficient ground of their conversion, cannot be extended to those persons in whom the purpose of opposition to the Divine order of good has come to full consciousness and determination. 1

Thus there is no possibility of God's Grace over-ruling the freedom of men.

Our examination of the doctrine of Justification,
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already completed, throws some light on the place of Grace

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Recht. u. Vers., p. 383.

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In case of further question as to the relations of sin, guilt, justification, and reconciliation, the following summary is added: "Justification is not to be understood as altering the consequences of sin, or as freeing us

in Ritschl's doctrine. Thus Justification, as practically identified with regeneration, is removed from all connection with Regeneration by Grace understood as God's power. This regeneration, which comes to one through the community, is not the Regeneration of which the Church has spoken, but is a revelation of God's final purpose for the community, and hence for the individual: an impartation of knowledge rather than of power. Ritschl's doctrine of the Kingdom showed how the divine initiative, which may be called Grace, is confused and bound up with the human response and initiative: divine Grace seems to depend for its very existence on human moral

from the evil which accompanies it, or as taking our good intentions for performance, or as judging the promise of faith as though it were already realized, but as that pardon which recognizes sin, and in spite of it, restores fellowship. Sin being a perverted relation to God, justification is a restoration of the right relation. Not by the removal of imperfection, but in spite of imperfection, the sinner enters into communion with God. In this sense it is a removal of guilt, which is not liability to punishment, but a real disturbance of the relation of the will to its moral destiny and to God who is the author and representative of that destiny in the world order. Like pardon among men, it's a cancelling which at once maintains the honor of the person who has been offended and restores fellowship with the offender. And reconciliation is only a more positive assertion than justification that a sinner is brought into harmony with God's cherished purpose." John Oman, Problem of Faith and Freedom, pp. 376-77.

activity.

Finally, the decisive argument as to the nature and necessity for Grace to the Christian is always the fact of Christ and His redemption. The answer to "redemption from what?" is sufficient basis for the full doctrine of Grace. But, as was seen above, to Ritschl the redemption of Christ is nothing more than the "maintenance of fidelity in His calling and His blessed fellowship with God through suffering unto death." Reconciliation itself, which is the happy state made possible by the redemption of Christ is "not an objective divine act in the sacrifice of Christ", according to Ritschl. In such a morass of subjectivism, how can a sound doctrine of Grace be expected to grow? Finally, the mere possibility of a doctrine of Sacramental Grace is unlikely in a modern Protestant theologian; when we recall this subjectivism besides, it is not surprising that Sacramental Grace is unheard of in Ritschl.

The conclusion is, that when Ritschl speaks of the "Grace of God", he means something radically different from what the Church has meant. In short, whereas the Church has meant by God's Grace God's powerful operation in the life of the world and the lives of men, whether as His personal Spirit or as an impersonal force generated by the Spirit, now Ritschl means by God's Grace His love and forgiveness, shorn of His justice. We have mentioned Christ's Work, here

and in S. Augustine's doctrine. It is in the work of Christ that the doctrine of Grace is summed up, both in Catholic doctrine and in Ritschlian doctrine. Catholic doctrine has always held that in Christ's suffering is met the demands of God's justice on the one hand, and His mercy on the other. Ritschl denies it absolutely; his book is devoted to denial.

Nothing needs to be done or to be suffered on account of God's hatred of sin. God's righteousness is not to be thought of as an inherent attribute, but as an operative purpose. The kingdom of God is what God lives and works for. He does not vindicate His righteousness by punishing sin; He realizes it by establishing the kingdom of God. He does not look backward to the sinner's past, but forward to the sinner's future. He does not regard him as an actual transgressor of His law, but as a possible citizen of His kingdom. He cancels the sinner's past, so to speak takes no account of it, in order that the sinner unburdened with, unfettered by his sense of guilt and sin, may be capable of realizing his future. 1

This forgiveness is unintelligible apart from Christ, who is our High Priest putting us in His own relationship with God, by having maintained that relationship perfectly through His life:

For Christ's death, as it must be explained by His previous obedience, is in the view of the Apostles, the summary expression of the fact that Christ maintained His religious unity with God and His position as the Revealer of God throughout the whole course of His life. 2

1 Garvie, op. cit., p. 317.

2 Rechtf. u. Vers., p. 543.

If the doctrine of Grace is summed up in the Work of Christ, that Work is in two principal directions: the foundation and the representation of the Kingdom of God. Christ has founded the community by His suffering and example; not by any substitutionary atonement, but by showing men what God wills their true relationship to be. He showed men how to recognize His Father as their Father, and His gifts to the community are free and not rewards. Christ suffered by His own choice and by God's will, and not because the community needed rewarding. But the good has now been established in the community by Christ's Work. And secondly, Christ is and will continue to be the representative of the Christian community in the following sense. The community's good, which is the forgiveness of sins, is extended to the individual as he accepts the community's task, the building of the Kingdom of God. And that good is made available to men by Christ's representing them, in achieving the same good Himself when He too accepted the task and showed men how it could be done. As any man receives this forgiveness by taking up the task, he does so through the community, which Christ established and which He represents.¹

Thus we conclude our discussion of Ritschl's

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Garvie, op. cit., pp. 319-322; summary of Rechtf. u. Vers., cap. 8.

doctrine of Grace by a return to its intimate connection with the doctrine of the Kingdom of God, as intimate a connection as existed in S. Augustine, though of a radically different kind. Is the relationship of Grace and Kingdom real, or a mere juxtaposition of similar ideas? Ritschl uses them in intimate and real connection, for to develop his doctrine of God, he finds the only real knowledge of God that is possible is His revelation of Himself as "loving Will" to His Son and the Kingdom of His believers who are the necessary objects of the revelation; we have¹ seen that His loving Will is the same as His Grace. Secondly, His loving Will has reality only when it is directed to a purpose. That purpose, as we have seen over and over again, is the building of His Kingdom. Thus the existence of His Kingdom is necessary for His gracious purpose to have any reality whatsoever.² In the end this leads to a complete dependence of God upon His Kingdom for Him to have any cogency at all; God reaches the goal of His own being only in the social organization of finite mankind. S. Augustine saw the necessity of Love's having an object for its own real existence, but being a Trinitarian Christian, put the object of God's love within Himself,

¹ Rechtf. u. Vers., p. 273.

² Ibid., pp. 276-77.

in the relations of the Persons, but Ritschl denies metaphysics and the metaphysically-based doctrine of the Holy Trinity, and hence has no such escape. As a matter of fact, all God's attributes, not only His Grace but also His righteousness, holiness, wrath, omnipresence, omnipotence, and eternity, are all made dependent by Ritschl in the same way upon the Kingdom which is made the object of each.¹

It is plain that there is the most intimate and real connection in Ritschl's thought between the Grace and the Kingdom of God; as intimate and real a connection as we observed in S. Augustine's thought. It is assumed, as was done before with S. Augustine, that the relationship is not only one of contingency, but is also causal. But which causes the other it is impossible to prove within the limits of our hasty summary. Garvie seeks to show that the importance which Ritschl ascribes to the Kingdom of God proves that the Kingdom is the basic concept in all Ritschl's doctrine and bears a causal relationship to the others, but I am inclined to think that just the reverse is true. I think it is rather obvious in the case of Augustine that his strong, indeed overpowering sense of the Grace of God in every department of life is the concept

¹ Garvie, op. cit., pp 260-263.

which molded all his other thought, including his doctrine of the Kingdom; in Ritschl I think it is rather obvious (to the Catholic Christian, at any rate) that his weak and anthropomorphic concept of Grace is that which molded his thought of the Kingdom. If both these statements be true (and there is no claim to proof) then, considering the great importance of both these theologians to the doctrine of the Kingdom, it would seem that for a doctrine of the Kingdom of God to be produced which is in any kind of a continuity with that of the Church, it is necessary for a theologian to hold a doctrine of Grace at least as strong as the Church's doctrine. At any rate, this is the belief which underlies the efforts at construction which we shall consider in the next chapter.

CHAPTER V

THE DOCTRINE OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD ON EARTH

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The question, "Can the Kingdom of God be an earthly social movement?" (in the sense understood by the proponents of the "Social Gospel", the modern representatives of Ritschlianism), is a great stumbling-block in modern theology, and may perhaps be taken as symbolizing the various questions we have considered in the last four chapters. There one system of doctrine was studied--the Ritschlian--which may be taken as the basis for an affirmative answer to the question, and another such system was touched upon--the Pelagian. Another system of doctrine was studied--the Augustinian--which would deny the possibility, and in this chapter another such system will be touched upon--the Barthian. Now the endeavor will be made to answer the question on the basis of Catholic doctrine, bearing in mind such ground as has already been cleared. Here will be found, incidentally, one of the two proper bases for denial of the question: in the Catholic doctrine of the Grace of God. That completed, I shall seek to state the Catholic doctrine of the Kingdom of God. In doing so, there will be stated first its proper relations to the interests and concerns of common life, incidentally finding the other proper basis for denial of the possibility of the Kingdom of God as an earthly social movement--

in the true and Christian value of those interests and concerns. Then in conclusion, I shall state the Catholic doctrine itself, and seek to draw out the background for a Christian program in the earth which will lead to the establishment of the truly Christian Kingdom of God on earth. It is well to note that whenever a view is confidently stated to be Catholic doctrine, the confidence is based upon careful study of the late Bishop Robertson's striking work, Regnum Dei, which I consider a fundamental and highly accurate history of the doctrine concerning the Kingdom of God.

Let us return to a distinction made in the third chapter, that between "Kingdom" and "Kingship", the former being an organized State of some kind with God as its head, and the latter the perfect Rule of God's all-pervading Will; both are comprised in the ordinary use of the term "Kingdom of God." Now when the possibility of the Kingdom of God as an earthly social movement is mentioned here, there will be indicated that emphasis upon the former of the two ideas which finds expression in the "Social Gospel" and related movements. That is, as was stated before, "a reorganization of this present temporal society, accompanied usually by a corresponding change in heart of all its members, such that the Will of God shall prevail in all social and individual relations, where the 'Fatherhood

of God and the brotherhood of man' will come to full fruition."¹
 The primary emphasis is on social reorganization, rather than upon the final aim of the Rule of God, and there is full expectation that it can be completely accomplished by the united action of men of good will, with very little dependence upon God's powerful Grace.

S. Augustine's denial of such a possibility was fully canvassed in the third chapter, and will but shortly concern us here. The conclusions were that if the modern idea were presented to him he would flatly deny it as un-Christian and impractical, but that he would strongly uphold the necessity of the Christian's full engagement in charitable work of social amelioration. Augustine would make a strong point of the slight possibility of any real good being involved in human society, per se. He would dismiss it as impractical, because of the transitory nature of this life and this world (Even were it possible, what good could it be for a man who spends sixty years here and an eternity hereafter?), and he would dismiss it as unChristian because it denied the absolute need for divine Grace for any good thing, social or individual. And the point of the denial of Grace he would make the most prominent. It could hardly be expected that Augustine would

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supra, p. 69.

approve of the "Social Gospel"--which rests on a Pelagian doctrine of man and sin--when he spent a good part of his life furiously castigating Pelagianism. S. Augustine would certainly deny any possibility of the Kingdom of God as an earthly social movement in the interpretation that is here given it.

Similarly, there has arisen a modern denial of this possibility, a denial which unlike S. Augustine, is in a chronological position to understand all the implications of the modern "Social Gospel", and then to put it away decisively as a denial of the power of the Word and Grace of God. I refer to Barthianism, which has made this social interpretation of the Kingdom of God one of its particular points of attack. Karl Barth had ample opportunity to see the developments of Ritschlianism in this direction, for he was raised in that German tradition. But in the duress of the Great War he saw the hollowness of all men's pretensions to do anything good for themselves, and turned resolutely to the apprehension and appreciation of God's Grace. Again, the point of denial of the possibility of this kind of Kingdom of God on earth rests on an assertion that Grace simply cannot be left out of the picture, if anything recognizably Christian is to result.

The noteworthy fact here is that both these denials would rest on the basis of affirmation of the

power and necessity of Grace. The previous chapters were devoted to demonstrating the intimate connection that exists (at least in the two thinkers Augustine and Ritschl) between the doctrines of Grace and the Kingdom of God. It was demonstrated that a deficiency in one accompanies a secularization and weakness in the other, and strength in one accompanies strength in the other. Now when it is observed that both Augustine and Barth would condemn the earthly, social idea of the Kingdom on the basis of its deficiency in the doctrine of Grace, it may reasonably be concluded that there is a distinct causal relationship between the doctrines of Grace and the Kingdom: a relationship in that order, the influence proceeding from the doctrine of the Grace of God to that of the Kingdom of God. This is not to be taken as proven (for that would require the study of many more theologians), but only as indicated: the indication, I think, is plain. The positive basis for the denial of the possibility of this interpretation of the Kingdom of God, then, rests in the Catholic doctrine¹ of Grace. It follows also that if an attempt is to be

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The Catholic doctrine of Grace is either that Grace is the Holy Spirit Himself, or is some impersonal power which He employs in His relations with men. Its operation is, I think, still to be seen in substantially the same terms by which the Council of Orange established semi-Augustinianism (not semi-Pelagianism) as the standard

made to adduce the Catholic doctrine of the Kingdom, the doctrine of Grace must first be considered and established firmly in mind, before the theologian is free to proceed in the hope of arriving at the truth. Thus, as this is the positive basis for denial of the possibility of the earthly, social Kingdom of God, it is at the same time the first of the two positive bases for a construction of the Catholic doctrine of the Kingdom.

The second of the two rests in the attitude to be taken toward the interests and concerns of common life. This subject has been touched upon from time to time, in particular in the third chapter in the consideration of the possibility of any good's being found in the Earthly Kingdom. Now what was seen there will be restated and discussed more fully. At the conclusion of this discussion there will have been established both of the two attitudes which must be taken to the consideration of the Catholic doctrine of the Kingdom of God, and we will then be able to conclude with a short statement of the doctrine itself.

for the whole Church. This doctrinal formulation, made in 529, is a norm which has never been successfully denied in either direction, whether of relaxation or ligation. It consists in five points: (1) The necessity of prevenient and concomitant Grace. (2) Grace is unmerited and precedes meritorious works. (3) All good, including love to God, is the gift of God. (4) The denial of predestination to sin. (5) A silence concerning unconditional election and irresistible Grace.--Fisher, History of Christian Doctrine, p. 197. Thus both terms of the dialectic of grace-freedom are maintained, without a synthetic resolution in either direction of Pelagianism or "Augustinianism."

In the matter of the relations of the Kingdom of God to the interests and concerns of common life on this earth, there are three attitudes easily distinguishable, that may conveniently be called the Secularist, the Millenarian, and the Catholic. The first two are, I think, mutually exclusive, but it is not impossible for a single theologian to hold the third in combination with either of the others. Thus S. Augustine in many places expresses the Catholic attitude very well; in other places the Millenarian view. They may be shortly distinguished as follows: the Secularist attitude holds that the interests and concerns of common life have exclusive value in themselves, the Millenarian that they are to be condemned utterly as worldly, while the Catholic attitude sees in them great value if they be approached as the field for display and development of Christian character.

The Secularist would say that these interests and concerns have their reason for existence in themselves, that whatever among them is good is to be sought for itself, and whatever is bad is to be avoided for the pleasure it would spoil or the pain it would bring. This is an attitude, which like ~~like~~ its associated philosophic theory of value, is based on an essentially infantile reaction to the world, the self-centered orientation of the child. It is an attitude which has never grown out of its first impressions of the

order of things, those being most valuable which can most immediately be reached and least valuable which are most distant, and which fails to look behind material or spiritual objects to their cause and ultimate meaning. That this view is fundamentally destructive to the Christian religion was seen as well by Ritschl as by Augustine. He saw that such idealized secularism "ignores the plain facts¹ of life and the equally plain purpose of Christ." Yet I very much fear that his followers have generally fallen into this pit in their unbalanced striving for a Kingdom of God on earth that will be of this earth, earthy. Ritschl would as strongly as Augustine remind such men that Christ actually said, "My kingdom is not of this world." It is plain that the Secularist answer is not satisfactory for Christian doctrine, and where it is held as a basis for a doctrine of the Kingdom of God on earth, that doctrine will inevitably be false.

The Millenarian attitude has two principal phases: it holds that the interests and concerns of common life are to be condemned utterly as worldly and beneath the attention of the Christian, or that they are to be condemned thus unless brought under the sanctification of the

¹ Robertson, Regnum Dei, p. 363.

Church. The first phase of this attitude is that of Millenarianists--or Chiliasts--proper, and some manifestations of the ascetic temper both Catholic and Protestant. It is found equally in the Millerite awaiting the end of the world, in the unkempt anchorite, and in the dour Puritan. The second phase is that of much medieval Christianity both Protestant and Catholic, and is exemplified as well by the Canon Law's minute concern with every phase of life and the detailed rule of the Genevan Consistory. This latter attitude shades imperceptibly into the attitude which alone is generally considered to be the one really Catholic. The first phase is that commonly known as the rigorist attitude; the second that known as the formalist attitude. Both are opposed by the attitude which finds expression in Christian humanism, which finds good in embracing, subject to the demands of Christian doctrine and morality, the joys and pleasures of this world. Now formalism in its usual sense of Rabbinism, is itself opposed to rigorism, and appears generally when the rigorist sense of Evangelical immediacy is worn away by a people's general acceptance of the Church's rule, when the task of maintaining the Church against pagan aggression disappears. At the same time, the two tendencies of rigorism and humanism are more representative of the Church at her best, and have travelled side by side down the ages, neither

achieving final ascendancy over the other.¹ If the attitude of rigorism corresponds to the first phase of what is here called the "Millenarian" attitude: i.e., the ascetical temper; and the attitude of formalism corresponds to the second phase: i.e., the legalistic, minutely legislative temper of the medieval Penitentials and Genevan Calvinism; it will be seen that only the first phase is representative of Christianity at its best. Then, although this rigorism is perfectly acceptable to Catholic Christianity, it has been through history set over against another attitude equally acceptable: that of Christian humanism. Since they are of equal authority, it is obvious that this Millenarian answer to the interests and concerns of common life--that is, the denial to them of any value whatsoever--is, while true, not the complete answer.

The complete and best answer, which shall here be called the Catholic answer, would seem to be a combination of rigorism and humanism. It will be somewhat as follows: the interests and concerns of common life do indeed have value of themselves, but only a value derived from the God who alone is ultimately valuable, and hence they are to be used (and enjoyed, if enjoyment is entailed) as the field for display and development of the Christian character.

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A full discussion of these relationships may be studied in Kirk, Vision of God, pp. 4-9 of the abridged edition.

Bishop Kirk, in studying the relations of the two attitudes in the field of ethics, comes to the same conclusion, holding that both are prerequisites to, and are involved in, the vision of God, which is the highest goal of the Christian.

He says:

Renunciation, detachment, self-denial must have their permanent place in every Christian life, however much at the same time we set ourselves to live in the joyous fellowship of human society, and as the beneficiaries of God in things both great and small... [Rigorism] must stand, alongside of humanism, as a permanent witness to an aspect of the doctrine of God which separates Christianity for all time from naturalism and pantheism. ¹

It was clearly seen, I think, how large a part of Augustine's thought of the relations between the two Kingdoms expresses ideas basically similar to this. It is plain that the same idea is to be found in Ritschl's thought, though it may be that he ascribes too small a place to rigorism (as Augustine often does to humanism). Yet both ideas are present. A quotation from Ernst Troeltsch, at first a disciple of Ritschl's though he has since come along a different road, will be of interest here.

The Christian Ethos gives to all social life and aspiration a goal which lies far beyond all the relativities

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Kirk, op. cit., pp. 200-01. It is interesting to note that Kirk, in making this proper Christian attitude rest in the doctrine of God is appealing, as has been found necessary to do here, to the doctrine of God and His gracious operation in the world, directing men to a proper appreciation of the things of both the world and the after-world.

of this earthly life, compared with which, indeed, everything else represents merely approximate values. [This is his interpretation of the Kingdom of God]...Thus it raises the soul above the world without denying the world. This idea, which is the deepest meaning of all Christian asceticism, is the only means by which strength and heroism may be maintained in a general spiritual situation, in which the emotional life is infinitely deepened and refined...a perennial source of strength for strenuous activity, and a certainty of aim, both of which make for simple health and soundness of mind. All social Utopias, then, become superfluous. 1

This, then, is the Catholic answer to the problem of the proper attitude toward the interests and concerns of common life: that they are not to be denied utterly, nor yet found all-absorbing; they are to be used for the exercise of Christian character, and all their benefits and joys appertaining are to be accepted happily as the beneficent gifts of God: in short, a combination of the rigorist and humanist attitudes, which finds them ultimately to be not so incompatible as they seem at first sight and which finds life on this earth to be not nearly so discontinuous with the life of the Kingdom of God hereafter as the prophets of both worldliness and otherworldliness have seemed to think. This is the second of the two positive bases for the development of the Catholic doctrine of the Kingdom of God (the first was the Catholic doctrine of the Grace of God). With these two established, we may now proceed to the conclusion, which will be a summary of the doctrine itself.

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Ernst Troeltsch, Social Teaching of the Christian Churches, pp. 1005-06.

Let us return to the last quotation, from Troeltsch.

He continues:

All social Utopias, then, become superfluous; over and over again experience teaches that the ideal cannot be fully realized; but this does not mean that the seeker for Truth and justice need lose heart and fall back into scepticism, a temptation to which serious and truth-loving souls are prone, and the effects of which are very manifest among the finer spirits of the present day. The life beyond this world is, in very deed, the inspiration of the life that now is. ¹

Here Troeltsch makes a fine statement, but it is the mere echo of the one part of the doctrine of the Kingdom of God that all Christians everywhere have agreed upon: the Kingdom of God is primarily that which will come at the end of time, with the "new heavens and the new earth." It will be accomplished by God's divine and powerful Grace, and will initiate a state in which there is no longer need for such a thing as "the Kingdom of God on earth", for all the evils which the latter doctrine seeks to overcome will be done away by God Himself. It is the state described in the book of Revelation, with its marvelous combination of poetry and theology. It is the state for which now "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth together." In it there will indeed be human effort, but human effort freed from all limitations of this life, and enjoying to the

¹ Troeltsch, op. cit., p. 1006.

full the ineffable Vision of God. It is the part of Reality which is most real, of which all other forms of existence are shadows, for now "we see as in a glass, darkly", but then we shall see Him face to face. With S. Augustine we know that this Kingdom of God is the ultimate Reality, of which any earthly Kingdom whatsoever, whether society or Church, is but at best a shabby representation. This will come about through the Divine Grace, and is described in doctrine based on the Catholic doctrine of Grace. If the doctrine of Grace is true, then this interpretation of the Kingdom must be true.

But what of the Kingdom of God on earth, within time, awaiting the final manifestation of the only real Kingdom of God, above earth and beyond time? It should be realized that some interpretation of this Kingdom has been sought throughout Christian history by the common consent of Christians. It has taken various forms, and of late numerous new variations have been suggested, but all are agreed that there is such a Kingdom, bearing more or less continuity with the Eschatological Kingdom of God. Augustine sometimes called this Kingdom the Church, which in its spotted and wrinkled condition, is the earthly counterpart of the Eschatological Kingdom. Even Ritschl perceived some kind of continuity, though with him the Eschatological Kingdom is only vaguely considered. With him the continuity

would be a moral one, with Augustine it would be chronological--at the end of time the present Church Militant will be transmuted into the Church Triumphant. But all are agreed that a continuity of some kind can be looked for.

There are, it would seem, three possibilities of thought about the Kingdom of God on earth. There is the Great Society, the Catholic Church, or some combination of Christianity with the secular society. The answer must be found on the basis of the two doctrines we have by now established: thus it must be consistent with the full Grace of God, and it must be a place where, or a state in which, the Catholic attitude toward the interests and concerns of common life may be established and practiced. Where is that place, or what is that state?

Is it the Great Society, the apotheosis of the present only partially moral society, one in which equality will replace inequality, license will be liberty, brotherhood will be universal and really self-denying, loyalty will be to the common good of all and not confined to a narrow state- or culture-group? This is the purely ethical ideal, worked out by secular minds, and adopted by many of those who hold the "Social Gospel" and their associates. It is generally a symptom of fatigue among those who refuse to consider the basic theology of the Church and who set their own ideas up as a new kind of revelation. It may, I think,

be ruled out on both the grounds we have agreed upon: it assumes that man is able to accomplish and consummate the highest good without the Grace of God; and it finds the good of and justification for the interests and concerns of common life in themselves. It believes that these temporal matters are in themselves ends to be sought, and not the means whereby a far higher end can be achieved. In addition, this view sins against the common consent of two millenia of Christians to find this Kingdom of God on earth in some kind of continuity with the Eschatological Kingdom. The latter is denied by this view, or at best entirely unmentioned--to consider the latter kingdom is generally classified as an "otherworldly outlook", and thereby dismissed, as though that were enough to throw the case completely out of court.

The purely ethical ideal is not acceptable, but it does constitute a warning to all who would hold loyalty to the Church. The mere fact that many perfectly good men and women, who are seeking for the highest good they have ever heard of or conceived, cannot find an expression of that highest good within the Church because of the slackness, or the hypocrisy, or the active opposition to good on the part of Church members, this mere fact is enough to inspire the loyal Churchman to seek to purge the Church of those evils. The process of purgation in this life will be end-

less, I believe, for so long as the Church is filled (as she should be) with sinful men being made into saintly men, she will be spotted with sin. That is the meaning of the Eschatological Kingdom: that after we have done all we can, there still will remain so much to be done that only God can purify His Church, in the passing away of this world and all its sin. But this hope must spur us on to new efforts, it cannot be used as an excuse for doing nothing.

The second alternative is some form of what may be called "Christian Socialism", some admixture of Christianity with the present secular society. This ideal aspires to change the evils of the present society which are caused by sinful men, by changing those men into fit citizens of this Kingdom of God on earth. So far it is a commendable ideal, but it breaks down at the point where it seeks to change sinful men into saintly by some form of government or some system of legislation. It is crudely "an attempt to legislate morality." The world has seen much of this in its history, and it has always ended in failure, but that is not necessarily a criticism. The true criticism lies, again, in the two bases for criticism which we have adopted. To attempt to change men by changing the social order is to intrude upon the province of God's Grace (with one important qualification, to be noted immediately), and there are in the nature of man himself certain ultimate and sinful "rigidities"

which can be extirpated only by Divine Grace. On the other basis for criticism, Christian Socialism may be criticized on the same grounds as the purely ethical ideal, that it makes common interests and concerns ends rather than means. Yet this criticism may often not apply, at least for those Christians who, while holding this social view, yet orientate their Christian Socialism to the production of Christian character rather than the achievement of social ideals in themselves.

Here, as with the purely ethical ideal, there is warning for the Church. As Robertson has it:

That the Kingdom of God cannot find its approximate realization on earth while unrighteous relations prevail among men, that it demands social regeneration, the purification of trade and commerce, the moralization of the relations of employer and employed, the treatment of wealth as an opportunity for good work, not as a means of luxury and ostentation, that so far as Christianity fails to effect this the fault is largely with Christians themselves... [When those Christians are filled with the Grace of God, they] will inevitably assert the life that is in them by raising and purifying the life around them. 1

This last quotation expresses admirably the Catholic ideal of the use of common interests and concerns as a training-ground for the development of Christian character and charity. That truth is indeed to be found among

¹ Robertson, op. cit., p. 379.

those who hold Christian Socialism, and if it were accompanied by a full doctrine of the Grace of God, it might be the true doctrine of the Kingdom of God on earth. But it is not so accompanied. And the only place where, or state in which, both ideals are met, is in the aim for the extension and purification of the Catholic Church Militant, the Kingdom of God on earth. This is the only ideal which is capable in itself of fulfilling both the conditions. It is not to say that the Catholic Church has not, does not, and will not fall into the traps which sin spreads before her members. Both the other ideals provide warnings against these dangers, and the members of the Catholic Church must strive to avoid them. The point is, that only in the Catholic Church, despite the dangers and its frequent failures, only there is it ever possible to comply with the two conditions.

It should be remarked in passing, that in these references to the "Catholic Church" no implication is intended as to any particular doctrine for distinguishing which among the Christian bodies is Catholic, or part of the Catholic Church. We mean here the Church Universal, the sum of baptized Christians, "the whole body of Christ's faithful people." This is, in the best sense, the Catholic Church Militant here in earth.

This is the place where the Grace of God is fully

recognized, for here the Church knows that she exists for God's gracious purposes and by His gracious support is she maintained. Here there is room for human effort and the exercise of free-will, but only because that human effort is stirred up by God's effort, and only because that free-will is made truly free in the regeneration which God has given it. Here the working of Grace is seen in its most poignantly personal form, in the Holy Eucharist, the Sacrament of Union which strengthens the Christian for his participation in the attainment of the second ideal. For this is the place, likewise, where the interests and concerns of common life fall into their rightful place as the ground for the development of the Christian character, as good in themselves and capable of good use, and as producing, by God's willing, all manner of good and holy joy. For here they are seen as means, not ends in themselves; for here is seen the true end of all life, the other and primary meaning of the Kingdom of God, the Eschatological Kingdom.

Here also is seen that continuity between the here and the hereafter in the Kingdom of God which we have been led to expect. But this continuity is infinitely richer than any of the other ideals could conceive. This continuity, between the Kingdom of God on earth and the Kingdom of God hereafter, that is, the continuity between

the Church Militant and the Church Triumphant, is both chronological and moral. There is moral continuity in the spiritual bond of common interests and the common Object of worship, between the saints here on earth and the glorified saints in heaven, and there is chronological continuity in the familiar expectation of the final end and gathering together of all things terrestrial in the Parousia of the Son of God.

This is the other of the two fundamental forms of the Catholic doctrine of the Kingdom of God. And so the end of the inquiry shows, I think, the meaning of S. Augustine more clearly than he himself was able to perceive, in the time before the implications of his doctrine became obvious; and also shows why Ritschl failed, despite his great ability, sincerity, and high regard for the truth in God.

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